

# Talkies™

## Visualizing and Verbalizing®

*for*  
*Oral Language*  
*Comprehension and Expression*

Nanci Bell  
and  
Christy Bonetti

The *Talkies*® program aligns with a theory of cognition, Dual Coding Theory, and through sequential steps brings the nonverbal code of imagery to consciousness. The goal is to engage the individual to consciously create and access mental representations and stimulate his or her awareness of the imagery-language connection. *Talkies*® is not intended to diagnose or be an exclusive treatment for speech-language pathology and audiology disorders.

Illustrations: Phyllis Lindamood

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Gander Publishing  
412 Higuera Street, Suite 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
805-541-5523 • 800-554-1819

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Printed in China.

11 10 09 08 3 4 5 6

ISBN 0-945856-51-2

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## Foreword

The brain can only receive information from our senses, and it is a multisensory organ. National and international neurophysiological research dating from the 1960s indicates the brain wants to network and integrate that multisensory information as it moves it to the frontal cortex for cognitive processing. Also, through sensory-cognitive research, we helped to provide pioneering data on differences that genetics causes for individuals in the conscious awareness of this multisensory information. A portion of the population has been documented as unable to consciously access and integrate certain aspects of this multisensory information. Surprisingly, this is irrespective of gender, general intelligence, socio-economic class, native language, and age.

It is encouraging to report that intervention research reveals establishing sensory-language connections is the key to establishing those aspects of multisensory integration which individuals do not access genetically. The sensory information must be experienced as a physical reality through the "respond to the response" questioning by the instructor and discovery interactions. Language can then label the physical sensory reality which was discovered, and this sensory reality can then be talked about and thought about. On the basis of fifty years of research, brain scientist Karl Pribram (1991) observed that we cannot think about something of which we are not consciously aware, and we cannot be aware of something not perceived sufficiently at the sensory level to come to consciousness. This is why the discovery of the physical sensory reality is so important. If we try to tell someone else a sensory reality we have perceived, they can only memorize our label for it and try to remember it by that auditory label. The physical reality of the sensory information which the label named was not experienced and is still not accessible to the other person. The role of multisensory integration is that the integration of a different source of sensory information can bring the missing source of sensory information to conscious awareness.

For example, a severely dyslexic neurosurgeon was absolutely positive that his tongue made no action in producing the /k/ sound although he could see that my tongue did. After the use of a mirror and flashlight permitted him to see his own tongue act in that same certain way in a specific place to produce that /k/ sound, he put the visual aids down, made the /k/ sound again and said, "Oh! Now I can feel my tongue action as it goes back and up against the top of my mouth!" The

## Preface

While the *Visualizing and Verbalizing for Language Comprehension and Thinking (V/V)* program has helped many children, for years we wanted to write a primer to *V/V* for students who were too challenged by the program. Now we have. *Talkies* develops the imagery-language connection for young children, children with weakness in receptive and expressive oral language skills, and children on the autistic spectrum. The goal is to bring the sensory input of imagery to a conscious level and to connect that imagery to language processing.

In putting the steps on paper, an imaginary “you” has appeared once again, ever there to talk to in the early morning hours at the keyboard. This manual is for you. You will read about Chip, a six year old whom we take through the little steps of *Talkies* so you can observe the interaction necessary to develop the dual coding of imagery and language. Chip is moderately impaired in language processing and he has behavioral issues that were not included in the sample lessons. Chip’s story is a real story.

Imagery is a physical sensory connection to language. *Talkies* has a pattern of lots of little steps within big steps with the explicit goal of bringing the sensory information of imagery to a conscious level for students. The little steps are purposely repetitive practice. They consistently move through a sequence of receptive practice, expressive practice, and imagery practice.

You represent our hope to make a difference for the many children that need us all to try harder to bring them from darkness to light. While there may be areas of a child’s life that we can’t change or affect, we can teach them to comprehend and express language. We can teach them to communicate and think critically. This we can do. This you can do.

Nanci Bell and Christy Bonetti

February 2006

# 1

## From a Silent Movie to a Talkie

A little boy with dark hair and big brown eyes looked around the room. He gripped his mother's hand while his father reassuringly touched the top of his head. At six years old, Chip had been brought to a new professional to try yet another intervention.

Chip didn't really "talk." He had difficulty understanding and expressing language, causing him to seemingly reside in his own world, surrounded by frustration, anger, and sadness. He rarely laughed—he seemed alone.

A thick file documented years of speech therapy, a variety of professional consultations, and individualized therapy to develop Chip's affect and engagement through play interaction. His history showed delayed language acquisition and a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Despite extensive effort and small important successes, at six years old Chip had difficulty communicating his wants and needs with language. Often his frustration grew until either his behavior worsened or he retreated to his aloneness.

As Chip began first grade, his teachers and parents were desperate to help him. He had difficulty interacting with the children in his class, often sitting alone or demonstrating inappropriate behavior that caused the other children to avoid him. He had difficulty making friends and responding to instruction or verbal communication.



to establish trust, engagement, and reciprocity. As you are playing, also direct the play to the imagery-language connection by referring to picturing as part of your thinking process and as part of the communication between yourself and the student.

In the first session with Chip, Miss Billie starts the connection with, "Let's play with these toys!" Getting a bag of toys, she lets Chip choose toys and begin to play with them. As he plays, Miss Billie engages with him, verbalizing what he is doing, talking about her own imagery, and noting his response to her. As she responds to his responses, she closes the circle of communication between herself and Chip. If the student is engaging in Floortime activities, this will be a comfortable beginning environment for him.

### *Object Imagery*

As the student begins to engage with you, overlap to the second little step in Sensory-Language Play. Play by having the student visualize an object that is given and then taken away (hidden). It is important to introduce the concept of imagery with an object to picture. By giving the student an object to see and touch, the visual and kinesthetic input will assist him with imagery-recall.

Beginning where Chip left off in the first little step, Miss Billie presents the concept of imagery, giving him an object to visualize.

#### S A M P L E L E S S O N

##### *Object Imagery: Touching and Gesturing*

**Billie:** "You were playing with the red ball. I can picture that ball even when it is gone."

**Chip:** He watches.

**Billie:** "When I picture something, I see it in my mind. Here is a red ball." She touches the red ball. "Now when I take it away, I can still picture the red ball in my mind. It is like this." She gestures the shape/size of the ball.

**Chip:** He watches.





**Billie:** Quickly re-setting the climate, she draws a head and a thought bubble with a ball in it. "See, I can picture the ball in my mind."

**Chip:** He watches.

**Billie:** "Now it is your turn. Feel the ball all over. Close your eyes. Now open them and look at the ball again."

**Chip:** He touches the ball, closes his eyes quickly, and then opens them.

**Billie:** "Now, the ball is gone. Show me with your hands what you pictured for the ball."

**Chip:** Silent, he quickly gestures something in front of him. Miss Billie takes his hands and helps him make the shape of the ball.

**Billie:** "Great. You showed me what you pictured. Let's do another one."



### **Lesson Summary:**

#### ***Object Imagery: Touching and Gesturing***

- Student is given a simple, known object.
- Student feels the object with his eyes open and then closed.
- With the object taken away, the student gestures the object's size and shape.
- Teacher may help the student gesture.

With object imagery introduced, Chip and Miss Billie do a few more and then move to the next little step, receptive play. She continues to do object imaging while she overlaps to the next steps. She knows Chip's imagery is still not strong, vivid, or brought to consciousness.

#### ***Receptive Play: Student Judges Right or Wrong with Nonverbal Response***

In Receptive Play, the student is the "teacher" and judges your responses. Once he can judge whether you are wrong or right, then he can judge whether he is