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Pragmatics and Social Communication: Assessment

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Pragmatics and Social Communication

PART 1: Assessment

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Disclosure Statement

Financial –

Author, *The Pirate Who Couldn't Say Arr*

Author, *Simply Social At School* (Super Duper Publications)

Author, contributes various works on “TeachersPayTeachers”

Author, *Spelling That Makes Sense*

Presenter, receiving an honorarium for today's workshop

Non-Financial – None

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Learner Objectives

- List the considerations involved in using a standardized measure of pragmatic language knowledge.
- Identify the components of social communication as outlined by ASHA.
- Describe the impact of screen time on the development of social communication abilities.
- List at least three important questions or factors to consider related to differentiation of pragmatic difficulties from related areas of disability.
- Define at least three key terms that relate to early social communication.

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ASSESSMENT:

- The question should not be “is this behavior present (yes or no)?”, but WHEN is the behavior appropriate vs. inappropriate.
- Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence
- Standardized assessments of pragmatics do not take into account stressors in an academic environment like...

Interactions with peers	Inconsistent structure
Sensory stressors	Peer Interactions
Impulse control	Disinhibition
New and novel situations	Emotionality
Non-predictable routines and environments	

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Code of Federal Regulation 300.304

- Use a *variety of assessment tools* and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information
- Do not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child
- Use assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information

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Components of Social Communication

Social Interaction

Social Cognition

Verbal Language

Nonverbal Language

Language Processing

http://www.asha.org/uploadedfiles/asha/practice_porta/clinical_topics/social_communication_disorders_in_school-age_children/components-of-social-communication.pdf

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Medical Diagnosis:

- A medical diagnosis helps determine medical and/or pharmacological needs and/or rule out genetic syndromes, related conditions or comorbid diagnoses with similar symptoms...

Prader-Willi Syndrome,
Fragile X Syndrome,
Angelman Syndrome,
Landau-Kleffner Syndrome,
22q deletion,
Reactive Attachment Disorder,
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder,
Seizure Disorder
Selective Mutism,
Traumatic Brain Injury,
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder,
Bipolar Disorder,
Anxiety,
gastrointestinal problems
ADHD

Educational Classification:

- Includes information about academic achievement
- Notes any adverse effect on functional performance
- Is designed to provide the foundation for writing an IEP

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Misdiagnosis:

- "... misdiagnosis may be as high as 15-20%" (Dr. Barry Prizant, Autism Quarterly, Summer 2012)
- "13% of children who were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders lose their diagnosis later" (The Center for Health Statistics)
- A 2012 study published in the *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, found that 4 percent of children lost their diagnosis by age 8.
- In a Yale Child Study Center report, it was noted that "toddlers with delayed language development are almost identical to their autism spectrum disordered counterparts in their use of eye contact to gauge social interaction".

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Incidence and Prevalence:

- According to the CDC, in 2014 the prevalence of Autism in U.S. children increased 119.4% from 2000-2010.
- According to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Educational Statistics, in the 2000-2001 school year the number of students age 3-21 receiving special education for Autism was 93,000... In 2011-2012, it was 455,000.

1975 – 1 in 5,000

2005 – 1 in 500

2008 – 1 in 168

2010 – 1 in 110

2012 – 1 in 88

2014 – 1 in 68

2017 – 1 in 45

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Screen Time:

- In 2011, 38% of children eight and under were using tablets or smartphones. In 2013, it increased to 72%.
- In 2013, 40% percent of kids under the age 2 were using tablets or smartphones *before they could speak*.
- Screen time negatively impacts the development of ...
 - problem-solving skills
 - self-regulation
 - reading comprehension
 - being physically active from a sensory perspective
 - learning how to deal with things that are out of their control
 - face-to-face interactions
 - eye contact
- “Virtual Autism”

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Is the student breaking a social rule they do not LIKE,
do not AGREE with and/or are unable to STOP
themselves from breaking **OR** are they breaking a
social rule they do not KNOW?

Once they learn the rule,
do they continue to
break it? If so, why?

What is the
pervasiveness of the
difficulties? Is it specific
to certain topics, times
of day, settings, people
or location?

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Self-Regulation:

The ability to stop, inhibit
and/or change your behavior
or emotions, persist through
things that are hard, ignore
distractions and consider
consequences before
committing to an action.

Imitation:

Imitating words, actions,
facial expressions, songs,
fingerplays, gestures, etc.
NOTE: You imitating the
student is often the first step.

Means to an End:

Understanding that a certain
word or behavior will achieve
a desired outcome.

Joint Attention:

A shared focus towards an
object, each other or another
person.

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Link between Behavior and Consequence:

If _____, then _____.

Nonverbal
performatives:

Nonverbal skills including gestures, facial expressions, giving, showing, pointing waving, and much, much more!

Responding to adults/peers:

- ☐ protest
- ☐ comment
- ☐ label
- ☐ request

Play:

- ☐ onlooker
- ☐ parallel
- ☐ associative
- ☐ cooperative

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**Top 10 Early Social Communication Recommendations
(especially in classrooms)**

1. Five words at a time/core words
2. K.I.S.S.
3. Predictable routines
4. Choice of two
5. Imitation
6. Sabotage
7. Books (especially repetitive books)
8. Sensory breaks
9. See it say, it
10. I start, you finish

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THANK YOU!

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