Speech & Language: Inflections, Social Cues, Pragmatics and Body Language

Why is it important?

- In 1971, Albert Mehrabian published a book Silent Messages. He found that 55 percent of a message’s meaning to the speaker’s body language and another 38 percent to the tone and music of their voice. They assigned only 7 percent of their credibility assessment to the actual words.
- In the 1960s Professor Albert Mehrabian and colleagues at the University of California used the word “maybe” three different ways. The subjects correctly identified the emotions 50 percent more often from the photos than from the voice. Each word was pronounced three different ways. When asked to guess the emotions being conveyed, it turned out that the subjects were more influenced by the tone of voice than by the words themselves.

Social Skills and DOCC

- Individuals with ACC have difficulty transferring more complex information from one hemisphere to the other.
- Social difficulties (missing subtle social cues), even when their intelligence quotient is normal.
- Recent research suggests that specific social difficulties may be a result of impaired face processing.
- May show flat, delayed or inappropriate affect.
- May demonstrate impulsive speech, gestures, body language.

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication between people is communication through sending and receiving wordless clues. It includes the use of visual cues such as body language (kinesics), distance (proxemics) and physical environments/appearance, of voice (paralanguage) and of touch (haptics).

- Facial expression
- Tone and pitch of voice
- Gestures
- Body language
- Physical distance

Pragmatic Language. Pragmatics refers to the social language skills we use in our daily interactions with others. They include what we say, how we say it, our body language and whether it is appropriate to the given situation.
By the age of one:
• Smiles spontaneously, responds to his own name, responds to no, responds differently to strangers than to familiar people, imitates simple actions of others

Between ages one and two:
• Refers to self by name, initiates self-play and will play alone, recognizes self in mirror or picture, imitates adult behaviors in play, helps put things away

Between ages two and three:
• Plays near other children, will watch them and briefly join in their play, begins pretend play, participates in simple group activity, knows gender identity, defends own positions, symbolically uses objects when playing

Between ages three and four:
• Joins in play with other children for longer periods of time and begins to interact, shares toys, takes turns with assistance, and begins acting out whole scenes in dramatic play

Between ages four and five:
• Comfortably plays and interacts with other children, shows interest in exploring gender differences and has realistic dramatic play with specific details

Between ages five and six:
• Chooses own friends, plays competitive games, engages in cooperative play with other children involving group decisions, role assignments, and fair play.

Between ages six and ten:
• Makes friends easily and friends become more important, knows right from wrong, needs love and understanding, becomes more self-aware and self-esteem can be fragile, becomes a better loser and more able to accept blame, feels guilt and shame, likes clubs and teams, wants to be part of a group.

Between ages ten and fourteen:
• Establishes individuality and separation from parents; friends and social life become the primary motivations of behavior.

Pragmatics is a subgroup under social skills & involves three major communication skills:

Using language for different purposes, such as
• greeting (e.g., hello, goodbye)
• informing (e.g., I'm going to get a cookie)
• demanding (e.g., give me a cookie)
• promising (e.g., I'm going to give you a cookie)
• requesting (e.g., I would like a cookie, please)

Changing language according to the needs of a listener or situation, such as
• talking differently to a baby than to an adult
• giving background information to an unfamiliar listener
• speaking differently in a classroom than on a playground

Following rules for conversations and storytelling, such as
• taking turns in conversation
• introducing topics of conversation
• staying on topic
• rephrasing when misunderstood
• how to use verbal and nonverbal signals
• how close to stand to someone when speaking
• how to use facial expressions and eye contact

Specific Skills
• Eye contact
• Joint attention
• Greetings
• Polite
• Initiates an interaction
• Turn taking
• Stays on topic
• Ask and answer questions (makes requests)
• Body position/social distance
• Terminates an interaction
• Understands emotions

• Differentiates social roles
• Accepts constructive criticism
• Resolves conflict
• Perspective taking

(American Speech Language Hearing Association)
Intervention
- Direct Instruction

- Conversation: Sharing ideas or thoughts between people
  - I think: What I say in my head
  - Greet: To say hello when I first see someone
  - Topic: What we are talking about
  - Eye contact: looking at the person
  - Listen: Not talking, using my ears
  - My turn: when I talk
  - Ask: what I do when I want to know something

(Taken from T.H.E. P.A.C.T. - Phyllis Moxom Social Skills & Social Language Curriculum)

Social stories – Carol Gray
(developed for people with autism)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=emaFNYIYFILU

Comic Strips
Introduced as “Cartoon Strip Conversations” by Carol Gray, creator of “Social Stories,” comic strips are an effective way to support the instruction of appropriate interactions to children with language and social deficits.

Cartoons are powerful teaching tools and can:
Tell a complex story in a few images
Provide comment and provoke thought on events and issues in the news
Give an example of vocabulary related to current trends and fads
Provide easily identifiable characters to form the basis for sketches
Show culture in action with the ways that men or women are behaving and are expected to behave
Comment on and illustrate a whole range of issues like racism, teenage relationships, sexism, ageism, family relationships.
Scripting

My Favorite Things & What are Yours?
Show & Tell (Look what I have)
What I did in School (over the weekend, for summer vacation, etc.)
Meal Time Talk
Initiating and Maintaining Play
A Special Interest
Initiating and Completing Surveys
Telling or Reading a Personal Story together
Gift Giving & Receiving
Greetings & Hallway Talk
Ice Cream Truck Conversation
Weather
Holidays

Joint Action Routines (Lee K. Snyder-McLean, Ph.D.,
University of Kansas 1984)

- Ritualized interaction patterns involving joint action with a specific goal. There is a clear beginning, sequence and end. Participants have clear roles and expected responses.
- https://vimeo.com/129134583

Video modeling

- Video modeling is a form of observational learning in which desired behaviors are learned by watching a video demonstration and then imitating of the behavior of the model. In video self-modeling (VSM), individuals observe themselves performing a behavior successfully on video, and then imitate the targeted behavior.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBPyVL3S5-k

iPad apps

- Everyday Social Skills
  Company: The Conover Company
  Category: Social Skills
  Price: $6.99

- Model Me Going Places
  Company: Model Me Kids
  Category: Life Skills
  Price: Free

- Between the Lines
  Company: Hamaguchi
  Category: Social Skills
  Price: $19.99

Role playing

- the acting out or performance of a particular role or social situation
**Modeling**

- Daily conversations with children are an excellent way for parents to model basic communication skills. Deliberate conversations with children, using polite conversational skills, help lay a foundation for good communication.

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**Read Aloud Books**

**DESCRIBE:** Talk with your child about what they think the main point of the story was. What character trait did the story define? How do you know? Why is it important? Can you make a connection to the story from your own life?

**PROMOTE:** Promote, support, and encourage your child as they initiate and engage in behavior that demonstrates the character trait. Catch them being kind, flexible, honest, confident, etc.

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**The Invisible Boy**  
By Tracy Lewis  
A heart-warming story about a boy that nobody ever seems to notice or think to include, until a new kid arrives in class and he finds a way to shine.

**My Mouth is a Volcano**  
By Julia Cook  
An entertaining story that addresses the universal challenge of teaching children the value of respecting others by listening and waiting for their turn to speak.

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**Other ideas for home**

[External link: http://www.weareteachers.com/]
Resources

- The Conversational Effectiveness Profile which can be accessed at no charge from an article by Timothy Kowalkee at http://www.jasha.org/jasha/journal/vol_10.php
- Test of Social Pragmatics-2 by Phelps-Teresaki & Phelps-Gunn (Western Psychological Service).
- Discourse Skills Checklist (Paul, 2007).
- Pragmatic Language Skills Inventory by Gilliam and Miller (Pro-Ed).
- Yale in Two Pragmatic Protocol (Paul, 2005)
- Model Me Kids: www.modelmekids.com
- Social Stories: carolgraysocialstories.com

- http://www.smartappsforkids.com/
- Carol Gray: The New Social Story(TM) Book: Anniversary Edition
- ComicStrip - CS (iPod Touch/iPhone/iPad)
- Comic Creator (iPod Touch/iPhone/iPad)
- PhotoComic (iPod Touch/iPhone/iPad)
- Comic Book! (iPod Touch/iPhone/iPad)
- Comic Life (iPad)
- Comix Maker (Android)
- Comic Strip It! (Android)
- Storyboards (iPad)
- Cartoon Studio (iPod Touch/iPhone/iPad)

- Super Duper Publications – Ask & Answer Social Skills Games, Say and Do Positive Pragmatic Fun Sheets
- LinguiSystems- Functional Conversation Games, No Glamour Social Language Cards, Autism & PDD: Things I Can Say and Do, Social Language Development Scenes
- Faces & Feelings Listening Lotto – Key Education
- Social Sequences at Home – LDA Language Cards
- IEP Resources – Conversation Skills, Getting the Message: Learning to Read Facial Expressions