Strategies to support communication in the classroom
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Why are you here today?

What do you want to leave with?
Additional Needs

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Speech and language impairments
- Physical impairments
- Intellectual impairments
- Learning difficulties
- Sensory impairments
Assistive Technology

Inclusive (assistive) technology is defined as “the software and technology which helps people with disabilities and special needs to overcome the additional challenges they face in communication and learning” (BECTA, 2003)
Types of Assistive Technology

• Computers/ laptops
• Specialised software and devices
• Websites
• Mobile tablet technologies, eg iPad

Growing and expanding...
It Can’t Teach
S.E.T.T.

- Student
- Tools
- Task
- Environment
Communication difficulties in Autism

• May have little or no speech
• Copy or echo words (echolalia) with no real meaning attached
• Difficulty initiating communication
• Focus on talk about special interests
• Difficulty using language for a range of purposes
• Use and understand a limited set of vocabulary
Social difficulties in Autism

• Difficulty understanding social rules and expected behaviours
• Cannot initiate and maintain conversations
• Difficulty making and keeping friends
• Unable to effectively solve social problems and negotiate
• Problems expressing and understanding feelings and emotions
Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

- *Augmentative Communication* uses other forms of communication (e.g. pictures, gestures, signing) *with speech*

- *Alternative Communication* uses other forms of communication *instead of speech*
Unaided and Aided AAC

• **Unaided AAC:** All techniques that do not require any physical aids

• **Aided AAC:** Techniques where some type of physical object or device is used. Aided AAC is often divided into high technology or low/light technology systems.

*(Speech Pathology Australia AAC Position Paper 2004)*
Unaided AAC
Aided AAC

• Messages (words, phrases, sentences) are symbolically represented as photographs, line drawings, tangible objects or letters/words.

drink
Low/Light Tech AAC
High Tech AAC

- Custom Speech Generating Devices
- Mainstream Technology
  - iPod touch/iPad
  - Android Phones/Tablets
  - Laptops
So how do we introduce AAC?
Good practice approaches

• Aided Language Displays (ALDs)
• Engineering the Environment
• PODD
• Core Vocabulary
• CHAT Now
Aided Language Displays

• Use a teaching method called Aided Language Stimulation
• Requires modelling language using aided symbols
• Individuals learn to communicate in the way they experience the system of communication being used
Let's have a look
Aided Language Displays

- It is difficult for someone with language impairment to become a proficient AAC user if other people never model interactive use of their system during all aspects of the day.
Aided Language Displays

• Prospective users must be provided with frequent examples of interactive, generative use to acquire any semblance of proficiency.
Have a go!

Model aided language during an art activity with pipe cleaners
Aided Language Displays

• Aided Language Displays are NOT choice making boards.
• Choice making boards supplement ALDs.
• E.g. during lunch time there is a choice board for foods followed by lunch conversation board
Lunchtime ALD

Vs

what
Is it ready yet?

not, don't, can't

hurry up

more

food / hungry

want

wait a minute

finish

drink / thirsty

I, me, my, mine

hold

eat

something else

yummy

you, your, yours

help

taste

cook

yucky
Creating ALDs
Choosing activities for ALDs

• What happens across the day?
• How frequently does it occur?
• What activities are motivating?
Choosing messages for ALDs

• Should enable you to keep a running commentary of an activity.
• Should always be messages that the user could “say”
• 16 - 36 messages per activity
• Write them down and rank them
Words or phrases on ALDs?

- Cognitive level of the user
- Language goals
- Selection technique
- Time dependent nature of the activity
Have a go!

• Fold paper to 4 x 3 grid

• Choose a motivating high frequency activity

• Generate a list of words that could be used throughout the activity

• Include vocabulary such as names, actions, positions, requests, commands....
Using Boardmaker to create ALDs
Meaningful learning

• Often we teach in stimulus response activities eg. Find the shoes, find pants
• Need to teach in contexts that allow the student to see symbols being used
  • repeatedly
  • interactively
  • and generatively during meaningful activity
• Modelling shows student how to initiate and maintain – not just respond!
Engineering the Environment
Pragmatics

- Pragmatics – social use of language
- Using language for different purposes, such as greeting, informing, demanding, promising, requesting
- Changing language according to the needs of the listener
- Following conversational rules

www.asha.org
Pragmatics

• Need to ensure AAC users have access to and know how to use a range of pragmatic skills
• Dewart and Summers “Pragmatics Profile” (1998)
• http://wwwedit.wmin.ac.uk/psychology/pp/
PODD

• developed over the past 15 years by Gayle Porter
• each PODD format has been shaped by the experiences of both children with Complex Communication Needs (CCN), and their communication partners.
PODD

- PODD is a way of organising whole word and symbol vocabulary in a communication book or speech generating device to provide immersion and modelling for learning.
PODD

- Aims to provide vocabulary:
  - for continuous communication all the time
  - for a range of messages
  - across a range of topics
  - in multiple environments.

- Different formats, depending on the individual physical, sensory and communication needs of the person who will use it.
Let’s have a look....
Core Vocabulary

• Using common English words on an AAC display to enable a user to construct their own sentences.
Core Vocabulary

FRINGE VOCAB
• Low frequency words
• Only useful in one or two situations
• Often related to a specific topic

CORE VOCAB
• High frequency words
• Can be combined to get your message across in lots of different situations
Proloquo2Go

• Core and Basic vocabulary
• Requires less key presses
• Gives user enough language so that language development isn’t held back
• Allows enough language for good modelling throughout the day
CHAT-Now

- what
- not, don't, can't
- turn
- again
- loud (up louder)
- who
- want
- like
- finish
- quiet / soft (down softer)
- I, me, my, mine
- choose
- listen, hear
- different
- CD
- you, your, yours
- play
- next track
- fast forward
- over
- iPod

listen to music
High Tech vs Light Tech

• Both are just tools
• Both need good vocabulary design and good modelling to ensure success
• High Tech can offer more access options
• Some students more motivated by high tech and some don’t like it!!
• Most people need both – for different situations
Apps for Communication

Symbol/Picture Only
• GoTalk Now Free

Symbol and Text
• Proloquo2Go
• Touch Chat HD Lite
• Sono Flex Lite
• Grid Player

Text Only
• Predictable
• Verbally
Apps for AAC List

By the Spectronics Consultancy Team
Social Communication

• Social communication is a BIG part of our day.

• We use different forms of social communication – small talk, storytelling, greetings, wrap ups and farewells.
Social Communication

- Social communication is more than 50% of our daily conversation.
- Janice Light (1998) found that reasons for communication were (in ranked order)
  - Social closeness
  - Social etiquette
  - Information transfer
  - Wants and Needs
Small Talk

- Small talk is used as a transition between the greeting and information sharing stage, especially when people don’t know each other well or don’t possess a lot of shared information.
- Small talk is often the first step towards social closeness.
- There are even websites to teach you how to small talk.
AAC Users and Small Talk

• Many AAC users use little or no small talk
• This can be because
  • They don’t have access to small talk in their communication system
  • They don’t see the need for it
  • They think it is a waste of time.
• Light and Binger (1998) found that AAC users were seen as more intelligent, valued and competent communication partners if they used small talk.
Generic Small Talk

- People can use with a variety of different conversational partners because it doesn’t refer to specific shared information.
- Particularly effective for many AAC users as it has many different uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generic Small Talk</th>
<th>Specific Small Talk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is your family?</td>
<td>How is your wife?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s happening?</td>
<td>What are you doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t you look nice!</td>
<td>Nice haircut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s great.</td>
<td>She’s a great teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generic Small Talk

• Research showed most age groups use continuers as the most common form of small talk eg. Really? Yeah? Great! Cool!

• Some words were specific to certain age groups e.g. “bummer” used only by the 25 – 35 year olds

• Differences also based on friendship groups, geographical location, interests and life experiences.
Adult Generic Small Talk

- Awesome
- Bummer
- Hello
- Huh!
- Cool
- Great
- Good
- No
- Don't
- Come on
- I don't know
- Oh!
- Cute!
- Fine!
- I'm sorry
- There

[Image of various cartoon characters with text labels]
Apps for social communication

• Small Talk
  • Addresses areas of weakness in AAC systems or that AAC users don’t use
  • Fat Cat Snappy Chat
  • Useful in combination with other systems not stand alone
Sequenced Social Scripts

- Sequenced social scripts can really help a user to
  - Get a 'feel' for the anatomy of a conversation
  - Develop turntaking skills
  - Learn to interact with a variety of partners
  - Enjoy successful interactions
What are Social Scripts?

- support individuals in learning to claim, start, and maintain turns in a conversation
- Also called Participation Scripts
- For more information
  “Can We Chat? Co-Planned Sequenced Social Scripts: A Make It / Take It Book of Ideas and Adaptations” by Caroline Musselwhite and Linda Burkhart
What are Social Scripts?

- Social Scripts are interactions such as joke-telling, sharing life stories and general conversations.
- They help persons using AAC move beyond wants and needs to using 'real' communication for conversational purposes.
- Often give developing communicators a sense of the power of communication.
Anatomy of a social script

• Attention getters
• Starters
• Maintainers, holders and interjections
• Turn transfers
• Closings
Apps for social communication

- Social Scripts - opportunity for quick errorless communication
  - Jokes, Pranks, News, Cheering at sports events, Gossip, Messages, Interviews etc.
  - TapSpeak Sequence
Personal Storytelling

• As we get older the percentage of small talk decreases and the percentage of storytelling increases

• Older adults, in particular, use stories to entertain, teach and establish social closeness with their peers
AAC and Storytelling

• Storytelling with AAC systems has become practical and possible with improved technology

• However, we must be careful that the stories are ones which the person would choose to tell

• Storytelling is very personal and must be individualized
Michael’s Storytelling

- Michael is a young teenage boy
- Lives with his Mum, Dad and brother in Perth
- He has ASD and ID
- He uses gestures, words, sounds, facial expression and a Maestro device for communication
The Royal Show

1. We went to the Royal Show
2. I like to go up the Ferris Wheel
3. I petted the baby animals
4. The Katich family came with us too
5. Daddy & I went on the bumper cars
6. We watched some people chop wood
7. Mummy bought us some fairy floss
8. Fireworks
9. Money
10. We had to buy some tickets
11. We had something to eat
Apps for social communication

• Story telling
  • We build social closeness through storytelling
  • We use stories to identify people we might want to be friends with
• Pictello