2020 Texas Focus: Self-Determination
Friday, February 28th, 2020
1:30 PM-3:00 PM
The Foundations of Self-Determination for Young Learners with Significant Disabilities (Session 1 of 2)

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Developed for
Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired Outreach Programs
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Power Point Content

Slide 1:
The foundations of self-determination for young learners with significant disabilities part I
Texas Focus
February 28, 2020
Philip D. Schweigert

Slide 2:
For our learners the foundations of self-determination lie in the ability to interact effectively with people and objects in the environment

Slide 3:
Independence v interdependence

Figure 1 Four power line wires with a single bird on the left-hand side of the image and a flock of birds on the right-hand side of the image.

Slide 4:

Figure 2 Four circles positioned around a central circle labeled Elements of Communication. From top circle clockwise: Sender, Receiver, Topic, Means of Expression.

Elements of Expressive Communication
Slide 5:

Perception of self occurs through interaction with people, knowledge of surroundings, and mastery of skills.

The recognition of the association between one’s behavior and environmental outcomes is critical for future learning.

(Watson, 1966)

Slide 6:

Critical components of partner responsivity include (Wilcox, 1995)

- Sensitivity: The recognition of communicative or potentially communicative behavior
- Contingency: Contextually related and timely responses to potentially communicative behavior
- Consistency: Responding to the same behavior in the same ways, over time

Slide 7:

All concepts begin with relationships.

“A (deafblind) child will have difficulty developing accurate ideas about the world unless she has at least one trusting significant, meaningful relationship to serve as a center from which to explore the world in gradually widening circles”

Miles & McLetchie, 2008
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**Slide 8:**

![Circle labeled “Topic”.](image)

*Figure 5 Circle labeled “Topic”.*

The development of purposeful exploration of their environment is linked with the growth of the learner’s understanding and knowledge about the world (McLinden & McCall 2002)

**Slide 9:**

The act of reference emerges not as an individual act but as a social one (Werner and Kaplan 1963)

![Venn diagram: Three circles overlapping and labeled from top clockwise: Object, child, mother.](image)

*Figure 6 Venn diagram: Three circles overlapping and labeled from top clockwise: Object, child, mother.*

**Slide 10:**

First words are intimately tied to children’s experiences with objects or persons. First words are recalled by repeating experiences (Wetherby et al 1998 as cited by Bruce, S. 2005)

**Slide 11:**

How they explore and how much they explore provides them with cues and associations thereby influencing their ability to recall objects and events in their world
An appropriate and effective method of communication is necessary to interact socially.

Slide 13:
“when the focus is on successful communication, the form is reduced to its proper place of being a means toward an end, rather than the end itself” (De Thorne et al 2014)

Slide 14:

Figure 8 Cover of the Communication Matrix.

Slide 15:

Figure 9 Image of “Handout 1”. Handout appears on the next page of your handout.
### Description of the Communication Matrix levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. <strong>Pre-Intentional Behavior</strong></td>
<td>The child’s behavior is not under his own control. It is in reaction to things (such as feeling hungry or wet or sleepy). Parents interpret the child’s state from his general behaviors, such as body movements, facial expressions and sounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. <strong>Intentional Behavior</strong></td>
<td>The child’s behavior is now intentional (under the child’s control), but she does not understand that “If I do this, Mom or Dad will do that for me”—in other words she does not communicate intentionally yet. Parents continue to interpret the child’s needs and desires from her behavior, such as body movements, facial expressions, vocalizations and eye gaze.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. <strong>Un-conventional Communication</strong></td>
<td>The child uses pre-symbolic behaviors intentionally to express his needs and desires to other people. They are called “unconventional” because they are not socially acceptable for us to use as we grow older: they include body movements, vocalizations, facial expressions and simple gestures (such as tugging on people).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. <strong>Conventional Gestures</strong></td>
<td>The child uses pre-symbolic behaviors intentionally to express her needs and desire to other people. “Conventional” gestures include behaviors such as pointing and nodding the head “yes”. We continue to use conventional gestures as adults to accompany our language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. <strong>Concrete Symbolic</strong></td>
<td>Symbols physically resemble what they represent in a way that is obvious to the child—they look like, feel like, move like or sound like what they represent. Concrete symbols include picture symbols, objects used as symbols (such as a shoelace to represent “shoe”), certain “iconic” gestures (such as patting a chair to say “sit down”) and sounds (such as making a buzzing sound to refer to a bee).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. <strong>Abstract Symbolic</strong></td>
<td>The child uses abstract symbols such as speech, manual signs, or Braille or printed words. These symbols do not look, feel, or sound like what they represent. They are used one at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. <strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>The child combines symbols (any sort of symbols) into ordered two- or three-symbol combinations (“want juice”, “me want juice”), according to grammatical rules. The child understands that the meaning of word combinations may differ depending upon how the symbols are arranged.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 16:

Pivotal juncture of coordinated attention

The transition from pre-intentional to intentional communication is a developmental milestone second to none (Warren & Yoder, 1999)

Slide 17:

Intentional Communication

- Implies
  - Intentional behavior
  - Purposefully directed toward another person with intended meaning
- Requires dual orientation to both the communication partner and the topic

Slide 18:

Characteristics of Intentional Communication

- Persistence
- Repetition
- Alternating Gaze (body orientation, leaning toward)
- Changing the signal used
- Awaiting a response
- Terminating the signal when responded to
- Indicating satisfaction or dissatisfaction to response (Wetherby & Prizant 1989)
Slide 19:
What’s the difference between level III and level IV?

Slide 20:

![Image of the Communication Matrix Profile by Design to Learn.](image-url)
Slide 21:

**Ways to OBTAIN things that you want...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask these questions</th>
<th>Answer here</th>
<th>Communicative Behaviors</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Request New Object | Does your child intentionally show you that he wants something new (such as a toy or food) that is within his sight or hearing or touch? If yes, how does your child request new objects? | a) Whole body movement (jump) b) Move head towards desired item c) Anchored movement (outstretched arm) d) Foot movement (kick) e) Vocalizations (coo, squawk, laugh) f) Facial expressions (smile) g) Looks at you h) Guides your hand or pulls you over to desired item i) Touches desired object or person (without taking it) j) Reaches toward object or person without touching k) Activates switch (for orthopedically impaired) l) Other unconventional gesture | III. Unconventional Communication

- Unconventional gestures are used with intent of affecting caregiver's behavior

| 2. Request Absent Object | Does your child intentionally request things (toys, food, people) that are not present in the immediate environment? | a) Goes back/forth between you and desired object b) Gives or shows you something c) Beckons to you to come d) Holds out hand with open palm e) Holds hand(s) up or out to you (for "up") f) Points at desired object g) Nods head h) Raises or waves hand (for attention) i) Interpreted vocalizations j) Other conventional gesture | IV. Conventional Communication

- Conventional gestures are used with intent of affecting caregiver's behavior. Child shows "dual orientation."

| 3. Obtain More of Something | Can you see your child a) "continued"
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| 4. Communicate by Requesting | Does your child intentionally communicate; how does your child request new objects? | a) Whole body movement (jump) b) Move head towards desired item c) Anchored movement (outstretched arm) d) Foot movement (kick) e) Vocalizations (coo, squawk, laugh) f) Facial expressions (smile) g) Looks at you h) Guides your hand or pulls you over to desired item i) Touches desired object or person (without taking it) j) Reaches toward object or person without touching k) Activates switch (for orthopedically impaired) l) Other unconventional gesture | VI. Concrete Symbols

- Limited use of concrete (iconic) symbols to represent specific entities. 1:1 correspondence between symbol and referent.

Slide 22:

**Figure 12** A page from the Communication Matrix titled, "Ways to OBTAIN things that you want..."

**Figure 13** Close up of a portion of the previous slide image from The Communication Matrix. It shows how Unconventional Communication, Conventional Communication, and Concrete Symbols can be used by a learner to request an object.
Slide 23:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Symbol</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picture symbols</td>
<td>Picture of a dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text symbols</td>
<td>Text: &quot;dog&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 14 Communication Matrix Profile with various sections highlighted in yellow and green.**

Slide 24:

**Assessment of Early Communication**

[www.communicationmatrix.org](http://www.communicationmatrix.org)

Dr. Charity Rowland

**Figure 15 Image of The Communication Matrix website.**
Your Student:

- A child does not seem to have real control over his body yet. The only way I know that
  he wants something is because he fizzes or winces when he is unhappy or uncomfortable.
  He will usually come to you after he figures out what’s wrong, and he smiles or makes noises
  when he’s happy.

- A child has control over his own behaviors, but she doesn’t use them to try to
  communicate to me. She doesn’t come to me to let me know what she wants but it’s easy
  for me to figure out, because she tries to do things for herself. She knows what she wants,
  and her behavior shows me what she wants. If she runs out of something to eat, she will just
  try to get more, rather than trying to get me to give her more (level II).

- A child clearly tries to communicate his needs to me. He knows how to get me to do
  something for him. He uses various behaviors (fingertip tapping, shaking his head, tapping
  at my arm or looking back and forth between me and what he wants) to communicate to
  me. For instance, when he wants more milk, he might hand the cup to me or point to the
  refrigerator. (level III)

- If a child has no control over his behavior and you can’t communicate, you can
  try using some form of symbolic communication (such as signs, picture words, Braille, gesture
  symbols, or sign language). When he uses his symbols, it’s clear that he understands what they mean. (level IV)

Figure 16 Image of a portion of the assessment. See the handout that follows.
Scene Assessment Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
<th>#4</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My child doesn’t seem to have real control over his body yet. The only way I know that he wants something is because her fusses or whines when he’s unhappy or uncomfortable (he will usually calm down after I figure out what’s wrong), and he smiles or makes noises when he’s happy (level I)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My child has control over his own behaviors, but she doesn’t use them to try to communicate to me. She doesn’t come to me to let me know what she wants but it’s easy for me to figure out, because she tries to do things for herself. She knows what she wants, and her behavior shows me what she wants. If she runs out of something to eat, she will just try to get more, rather than trying to get me to give her more (level II)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My child clearly tries to communicate his needs to me. He knows how to get me to do something for him. He uses various behaviors (like pointing, shaking his head, tugging at my arm or looking back and forth between me and what he wants) to communicate to me. For instance, when he wants more milk, he might hand his cup to me or point to the refrigerator. (level III-IV)</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My child lets me know what she wants by using some form of symbolic communication (such as speech, printed words Braille, picture symbols, 3-dimensional symbols or sign language). When he uses his symbols it’s clear that he understands what they mean. (level V-VII)</td>
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Outreach Programs

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