2020 Texas Focus: Self-Determination
Friday, February 28th, 2020
3:30 PM-5:00 PM
The Foundations of Self-Determination for Young Learners with Significant Disabilities (Session 2 of 2)

Presenter
Philip Schweigert, M.Ed., Private Consultant,
Sandia Park, NM
alimnm@gmail.com

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

Slide 1:
The foundations of self determination for young learners with significant disabilities part II
Texas Focus
February 28, 2020
philip d schweigert

Slide 2:
Intervention…
Intervention includes:
  • The learner’s communicative and social skill development
  • The social environment and the behavior of others to provide (or not) the learner with opportunities to interact
  • The physical environment and opportunities for interaction available

Slide 3:
“Often, facilitators who support beginning communicators fail to build a strong communicative foundation before instituting AAC interventions to teach the use of symbols. Initial interventions often involve introducing a formal symbolic communication system that uses manual signing or pictures, even though the individual may not understand many basic elements of communication, such as turn taking, joint attending, and the role of other people as communication partners.” Beukelman & Mirenda, 1998, p. 280
Slide 4:
Pre-Symbolic Communication

Key Elements of Individualized Instruction

- **MOTIVATION:** What are reinforcing topics and settings for the learner to communicate about?
- **POTENTIAL RESPONSES:** How will the learner express himself/herself?
- **GAINING ATTENTION:** How will the learner initiate communication with others?
- **REINSTATEMENT:** How will the learner indicate to another person that s/he would like to continue an interaction?
- **REQUESTING/CHOICEMAKING:** How will the learner indicate his/her preference between two or more objects?
- **PROMOTING PROGRESS:** How do you design instruction to promote steady progress?

Slide 5:
Communication Bill of Rights

*Figure 1 Image of the "Communication Bill of Rights" from the National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities ([www.asha.org/njc](http://www.asha.org/njc)).*
Slide 6:
Excerpt from Communication Bill of Rights

Figure 2 Excerpt reads as follows: Each person has the right to: request desired objects, actions, events, and people; refuse undesired objects, actions, or events, express personal preferences and feelings, be offered choices and alternatives; reject offered choices, request and receive another person’s attention and interaction, ask for and receive information about changes in routine and environment, receive intervention to improve communication skills, receive a response to any communication, whether or not the responder can fulfill the request.

Slide 7:
Level I learner

- **Currently**: Spontaneous reflexive/reactive behavior

Partner perceived communication; assigns meaning

- **Issues**: lack of goal directed/purposeful behavior; lack of awareness of self, others and world around him

- **Focus of intervention**: to establish purposeful behavior by creating highly responsive environments

- **Goals**;
  
  o **Sender** maintain /Increase alert state for learning (emotional regulation)
  
  o Increase sender awareness of /attention to **topics** in interactions with **receiver**.
  
  o Demonstrate detectable and doable **means**
  
  o **Sender** demonstrate contingency awareness (cause-effect)
Slide 8:
Janssen, Riksen-Walraven, & Van Dijk, 2003 describe characteristics of Harmonious interactions including:

- **mutual attention** implying that child and partner are open to each other and shared attention
- **reciprocal attunement** requiring contingent responsivity, sensitivity to each others’ signals and leaving space/pausing for the other to take a turn
- **adequate emotional regulations** which refers to the ability to maintain or regain an appropriate arousal level

Slide 9:
**Arousal State Tracking (adapted from the SLK 2005 by M. Smith)**

*States; (descriptions of states from Brazelton et al 1977; Snell and Brown, 2002 as presented in SLK)*

- Asleep: Eyes closed, rhythmic breathing and/or little or no movement, no evident response to sensory stimuli
- Drowsy: Heavy eyelids, repeated opening/closing of the eyes, unfocused stare, intermittent orientation to sensory events in the environment for a short time
- Quiet Alert: Open eyes. Focused attention on some sensory event in the environment, attention may be visual, tactile, or auditory
- Active Alert: Observable interaction with the object or person, stimulating attention, some voluntary intentional movement
- Fussy: Mild distress and inability to maintain orientation/attention
- Crying/Agitated: Frown, cry, irregular breathing, increased tension/body tone, engage in self-injurious behavior
### Arousal State Tracking
(adapted by NMSBVI from the SLK 2005 by M. Smith)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Observer</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>State*</td>
<td>Position (how was the child positioned at that moment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 11:

“Maternal responsivity does not function independently of the child’s behavior and responsiveness. Either partner in the “dance” between parent and child is capable of disrupting the interaction…..” (Warren et al 2010)

Slide 12:

What is Interdependence?

Interdependence refers to a situation whereby actors or events in different parts of a system affects each other. Also it’s a mutual dependence the situation can be either good or bad.

Interdependence is a relationship in which changes or events in any single part of a system will produce some reactions or have some significant consequences in other parts of the system.

Slide 13:

Peter: ECP-Winter

Figure 3 Graph titled Peter:ECP-Winter.
Learned Helplessness (Seligman, 1975)

- A profound lack of perceived control over the environment may result in the loss of motivation to effect changes in their world
- This sense of helplessness can impede future learning
- May ultimately result in depression

Number of switch activations for Nyland across baseline, conditioning and withdrawal phases

Figure 4 Graph for Nyland showing total number of switch activations per 5 minute interval.
Slide 16:
Level II learner

- **Currently:** Spontaneous, purposeful/goal directed behavior
  Partner perceived communication; assigns meaning

- **Issues:** Learner does not yet demonstrate coordinated behavior to both partner and topic

- **Focus of intervention:** respond to potentially communicative behaviors so that learner becomes aware of their communicative purposes

- **Goals:**
  - Expand means of responding that serve to attract attention and reinstate desired interactions
  - Demonstrate preference of topics that are familiar to him
  - Reinstate desired interactions initiated by partner
  - Sender increases attention to partners and topics (joint attention)

Slide 17:
Reinstatement

- Helps to establish a relationship with the child
  - a reason to want to gain your attention

- Helps child link his behavior to his environment
  - May lead to development of detectable and doable behaviors

- Helps to provide an access to the environment
  - Familiarity with different topics
  - Preferences for certain topics
Slide 18:

This Sharing of a Common World is essential for a Communicative Relationship

- allowing you to learn from the child
- about his ideas and motivations
- allowing you to build on the child’s experiences

(J.D. MacDonald)
Slide 19:
Level III-IV learner

- **Currently**: *Intentional pre-symbolic communication*

  *Learner directs his behavior to a receiver with an identifiable message*

- **Issues**: Learner’ communication is currently restricted to topics and receivers that are present in that moment and his efforts to engage his partner may be restricted

- **Focus of intervention**: Shape non-conventional gestures into conventional gestures and/or target symbol use

- **Goals**:
  - Increase *sender* initiations and responses to interactions with receiver to make requests/choices and reinstate desired topics from array that is accessible (rate and fluency [e.g. decreased latency])
  - Increase *sender* strategies for establishing and maintaining joint attention with *receiver* around identifiable message/topic
  - Expand *means* of expression to use of more detectable (conventional or symbolic) forms
  - Demonstrate 1:1 correspondence between symbol *means* and referent
  - Discriminate between increased *topic* array of objects or symbols
  - Increase number of *partners* and *topics*
  - Expand communicative intents
Slide 20:
Level V-VII learner

- **Currently:** *concrete or abstract communication*

*Learner directs his behavior to a receiver with an identifiable message using symbols*

- **Issues:** Learner’ communication is currently restricted to topics and receivers who are present in that moment. Learner may use symbols for limited functions or in single “word” utterances.

- **Focus of intervention:** Increase symbolic communication and expand communicative intents.

- **Goals:**
  - (Increase) *sender* initiations and responses to interactions with a *receiver* to make requests/choices and reinstate desired *topics* from symbol array (referents may not be present)
  - combine symbolic *means* to expand mean length of utterance
  - Increase learner access to communication system/ *means*
  - move to more abstract symbolic *means*
  - Discriminate between increased array of symbols
  - Increase number of *receivers and topics*
  - Expand communicative intents

Slide 21:
Dual Representation

- Seeing the picture or object symbol as both a thing by itself
- And realizing that it also stands for something
Slide 22:
Symbolic Sensitivity

- The generalization of the concept of symbolic representation
- “… If this stands for this then can this stand for ….”

Slide 23:
It may be possible to teach someone to use a more abstract symbol through repeated practice but the task is far easier if the learner understands the representation inherent in the symbol

Slide 24:

Figure 5 Chart from Communication in Action at www.communication-in-action.net showing the 4 elements of expressive communication.
This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Education Special Education Programs (OSEP). Opinions expressed here are the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Department of Education.