DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: IMPORTANCE OF AAC FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD

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INTRODUCTION

• Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by deficits in social communication, social interactions and the presence of restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviors, interests, and/or activities (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

• Alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) is an area of clinical practice that addresses and supports the needs of individuals with significant and complex communication disorders characterized by impairments in speech-language production and/or comprehension (Beukelman and Mirenda, 2005; ASHA, 2019)

• The multi-modal capabilities inherent in an SGD system (i.e., tactile interaction with visual symbols and auditory feedback) enhances the client’s communicative abilities (Light, Beukelman, & Reichle, 2003).

RESULTS

• 30 intervention studies were analyzed

• 226 participants with ASD between 3-13 years old were included

• Most common intervention setting was in the school

• 16 different SGD devices were used in the studies

• 80% of studies (n=24) reported positive outcomes, 20% of studies (n=6) reported mixed outcomes.

• 0% reported negative outcomes following intervention.

AAC SYSTEMS REVIEWED

Fig. 1: LAMP Words for Life, https://www.liberator.co.uk/apps/lamp-words-for-life/about-wfl

Fig. 2: DynaVox V https://www.tobiidynavox.com/en-US/products/devices/?MarketPopupClicked=true

Fig. 3: Proloquo2Go https://www.assistiveware.com/product-s/proloquo2go

Fig. 4: GoTalk https://www.attainmentcompany.com/gotalk-9

REFERENCES


LIMITATIONS

• Small sample size

• Lack of demographic information

DISCUSSION

In recent years there has been a rapid increase in research related to SGDs as an AAC intervention for children with ASD.

• Positive outcomes and certainty of evidence were both high (80% and 86.7% respectively)

• Presents relevant vocabulary

• Begins with core words (e.g., help, eat, drink) and single utterances before introducing more challenging language concepts (i.e., phrases, sentences, etc.).

• Use of a SGD maximizes motivation and engagement

• Engages the learner in a language rich environment based on activities of their choosing

• Positive educational outcomes

• Development of communication and literacy skills

• Inclusion in general education settings

• Increased participation and engagement with peers

• Using an SGD allows for added sensory input and multisensory convergence

• More meaning is derived from the interaction, making it easier to store and recall

• Pairs a unique and consistent motor plan with auditory output

• Immediate feedback and natural consequences

METHODS

• Systematic searches were conducted in six electronic databases.

• Publication year was restricted.

• Limited to scholarly, English-language journal articles.

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