

Good why communication issues arise research paper example

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Communication Issues for Children with Autism

Introduction

Autism spectrum disorders are a collection of developmental disorders that have been increasing over the past decades. Autism affects every aspect of the child's development, especially verbal and speech development (Parr, 2010). The communication challenges facing a child who has been diagnosed with autism is an important topic. Millions of parent with autistic children long to have normal communication with their children and the whole experience of having simple conversations with this child can be an overwhelming experience. Parents with the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis report in their hand already are well aware of the differences they observed during their child's development and the limitations both face when it comes to communications. It would be interesting to know as to why these children with autism face these challenges when communicating and how we as parents, friends and educators can help these children. Children with Autism (ASD) have to deal with a set of developmental disabilities and one of them is the communication skills and this can lead to significant social and behavioral challenges. These children process information differently than other people and ASD can affect different children in different ways and the effects can range from mild to severe. These children may share the same symptoms and difficulties, but may differ in how those symptoms start and their severity. Most children show signs of future problems in the first year of life and the signs of ASD manifest themselves by the age of 3 (Parr, 2010). Autism is known to impact children from every race and socioeconomic background.

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Sometimes children with an ASD do not get diagnosed until they reach school-age and sometimes even adolescence. The symptoms were very much there in a child's early development. Parents report difficult preschool times or the child not being able to cooperate with other children. Social impairments are often noticed by the parents before the child has even reached 2 years of age and important milestones like the child greeting the parents, turn taking and enjoying lap games may not have been reached appropriately, which is a hallmark of autism spectrum disorders (Chiang, Soong, Lin, & Rogers, 2008).

Children with ASD are seen to live in their own private world and show little interest in communicating and interacting with others. They have difficulty in understanding what others say to them and are unable to develop communication skills. They are weak in expressing themselves through facial expressions and hand gestures. However, it is seen that not every child with ASD will have a language problem and his ability to communicate will depend a lot on his intellectual level and the social development he is exposed to. Some of these children have been found to have rich vocabularies and can talk on certain subjects in detail.

It is seen that most of these children can easily pronounce words, but have problems using the language effectively, especially when they communicate with others (Belmonte et al., 2013). They are not able to follow the words and sentences as well as the nuances of vocal tones. Some research looking at patterns of language use in autism has found that there is a strong

dissociation between the language structure and the use of language in a functional manner in children with autism (Wilkinson, 1998).

Patterns of language use

Repetitive words and language - children with ASD are seen to use rigid language that has no meaning and may keep on repeating words that he has heard. For example, the child may respond to someone by asking the same question that was asked from him. The condition is also known as echolalia. Some children with ASD tend to speak in a high-pitched voice or are found to use robot-like speech (Sharda et al., 2010). They may start a conversation with some stock phrases and may repeat what they overheard or hear on commercials or television programs.

High abilities in specific areas - Some children may develop exceptional abilities in the area that holds their interest, even though they may not be able to converse easily on the subject. For example, some of these children may develop musical talents or expand their math calculations. Research has found that about 10% of children with ASD display very high abilities in specific areas (Parr, 2010).

Irregular language development - Many children with ASD do show some level of language skills and speech, however, their vocabulary is not smooth. They may learn more words about the field of their interest faster as compared to others. Some children have good memories and can recollect words learnt a couple of years ago. Just because these children do not respond to speech, they are thought to have hearing problems, but this is not correct. Children with ASD avoid eye contact and unable to use gestures.

This may look rude to others and seem like they are uninterested, or inattentive to what is being said to them. Without a proper language and lack of meaningful gestures, many children with ASD are seen to get frustrated in making their feelings known. Therefore, one should expect inappropriate behaviors and vocal outbursts because of their weaker abilities to communicate.

There are some strategies and guidelines that can be followed by the parents and guardian of these children with autism to overcome the difficulties in communication. For example, they should always begin the conversation with the child using his name, so that he knows that it is he who is being spoken to (Amaresh Tippanna & Dr . Rabia, 2012). Make sure the child is paying attention when given an instruction. It is best to speak to him on the topic that interest him and keep him engaged on the area of his special interest. When speaking to, he should be looking in your direction and one should keep him motivated to listen.

In order to make it easier for the child to digest the conversation, reduce the amount of communication. In case you see the child getting anxious, this means that the conversation is overwhelming him. Therefore, keep the conversations short and that hold his interest for effective communication as well as to keep them motivated to listen. One can use visual supports like signs and symbols to support communication and help the child to process the information more easily. A child with autism finds it difficult to digest too much of information. Also, avoid using too many questions like where', ' when', and ' who', as these children find these conversations difficult and feel uncomfortable.

Speaking to the child in a quiet and calm voice is important for proper communication. Noisy and crowded environments should be avoided. Give the child time to respond and be patient with him before giving further instruction. The child with autism takes about 30 seconds to process information. If asking questions, structure them carefully, so that the child has different options or choices to communicate (Loncola, 2004). Be specific and short in the conversations and ask only the essential questions. For appropriate behaviors and spontaneous communication, reward and praise the child to keep him encouraged and motivated.

The pediatricians play an important role in evaluating autism disorders and offer the right direction and guidance to the child and the parents in how to manage these disorders. Communication is always a serious issue with these children with autism and the primary goal is to help maximize the child's functional independence and improve his quality of life. It is essential to facilitate development and learning, educate families and promote socialization among such children (Myers, Johnson, Council on Children With, the Council on Children With, & American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Children With, 2007). Suitable educational strategies and associated therapies are prescribed for the primary treatments for children with autism disorders. Some pediatricians prescribe a checklist approach, which can help parents monitor their child's progress in reaching the suitable milestones and appropriate reading levels (McConachie, 2007).

Speech and Language Therapy

Different approaches have been followed and found to be useful in improving communication skills in children with ASDs. The verbal behavior, pivotal response training, natural language example, has been studied thoroughly. Treatment by a speech-language pathologist for these children with ASDs is appropriate. Given the right environment and treatment, it is seen that most children with ASDs can develop useful speech. Any lack of discrepancy between languages or the failure to benefit from previous treatments should not exclude a child with ASD to receive the speech-language services.

Treatment from speech-language pathologists is found to be more effective as compared to the traditional service models. These pathologists work closely with parents, teachers so as to promote functional communication among such children. The use of gestures, sign language, and picture communication are effective in enhancing communication. Symbolic communication stimulates the children to talk (McConachie, 2007).

The use of augmentative and alternative communication modalities, including gestures, sign language, and picture communication programs, often is effective. The Picture Exchange Communication System helps the child to initiate a picture request and continue with the communication. The use of voice-output communication aids is still sporadic. The different augmentative and alternative communication systems help these nonverbal children with serious communication issues.

Lack of communication influences the social skills too in these children with autism (Chiang et al., 2008). Joint attention training in communication and social skills with newer naturalistic behavioral strategies can prove to be

especially beneficial in young children. A recent study has demonstrated that joint attention and symbolic communication can help develop language and social skills. Families can facilitate social interaction experiences throughout the day and incorporate those training programs in the child's regular activities. In fact, a model that looked at using peers as role models to improve social communication skills in children with autism found that at the end of the program, the communication skills of the children had shown improvement in all arenas (Loncola, 2004). This suggests that using dynamic and interactive communication skills programs to impart the necessary skills to the children does indeed have an impact on how they perform in social settings.

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are well experienced in the treatment, and prevention of communication disorders found in these children. SLPs are often an important part of the intervention team for children with autism spectrum disorders. Children often benefit under the special conversation programs designs by these specialists. The child has difficulty learning new tasks without prompting. It is essential to remember that, even those children with ASD who have excellent language abilities, can face a difficult time retaining large amounts of verbal information and processing the information.

We use iPad to check e-mail, play games or watch television shows. Perhaps these modern devices can help children with autism spectrum disorders to express themselves and facilitate them with communication. Recent research shows that these children with autism can learn to speak later than what was thought earlier. Therefore, if given the right environment and tools,

these children should not face any difficulty in expressing themselves through speech. iPads are proving to play an increasing role in making that happen, according to researchers of education and human development. It has been found that children with autism and aged five to eight to develop speaking skills faster when using speech-generating devices (Anonymous, 2014). They are able to develop more spoken words as compared to other programs and interventions. As the children moved through the training, they were able to learn new spoken words and even create short sentences. For some parents, this was a real joyful experience as this was the first time they were actually conversing with their child. That kind of communication with the help of iPods is giving hope to countless children with autism and generating optimism in their families.

We have seen the use of augmentative and alternative communication devices used for decades by these children. However, with the availability of apps, the iPad is definitely a much cheaper and user-friendly way to help these children with autism to communicate and express them freely (Anonymous, 2014). Moreover, the device is a lot less stigmatizing for these children who have to rely constantly on their parents, teachers and other fellow students for communicating. By the time these children reach school, they have mastered only a couple of words. Earlier, it was thought that children with autism did not learn to speak by the five or six; they are unlikely to develop any speech or communication. But recent studies and results have changed that notion and researchers are resorting to new speech-generating devices to assist these children with minimal verbal skills.

Children with ASD show difficulties in language and communication along with socialization. Parents are anxious about their child and have many concerns over the child's future, if he will be able to speak normally or go on to complete his education. Will he be able to lead a normal life and have a family? These anxiety-provoking questions are normal, but, there are still no ready answers. The parents should focus on meeting the child's current needs first, rather than focusing on the future. It is essential to make the child feel wanted and experience joy in his family's interactions. As adults, we should remember that each child with ASD is unique, and no two children will show the same symptoms for language and communication, socialization.

Thankfully, we live in a time that is technology driven and new discoveries and research is active in this field. The advent of technology will indeed be a new avenue for developing software and strategies aimed at making language development easier for autistic children. We have resources available that would not have existed half a century ago and the increasing awareness in the general public about autism spectrum disorders will ensure that research efforts continue in improving the communication skills of these children.

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