Programming for generalization of communication skills

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LASARD Project

Workgroup 3
December 14, 2010
Overview

- Discussion of communication and generalization
- Consider current communication goals
- Identification of potential communication partners and settings
- Plan for implementation
Everyone has something to say!

Individuals will express themselves through whatever means is available.

Instructional staff should provide each student with the most appropriate means to communicate and give that student the time, opportunities, and supportive instruction to be successful.

Downing & Demchak, 2008
Forms of Communication

- Speech
- Visual orientation
- Touching a person
- Touching an object
- Smiling
- Vocalizing
- Body movement
- Assistive device
- Holding out an object
- Sign language
- Pointing
- Giving a picture
- Writing
Reason or purpose for communication

What are some functions of communication?

- Requesting
- Reject/protest
- Attention to self
- Comment
- Social greeting

I want that!

Look at me!

This is fun!

No thanks!

Hey y’all!
The occurrence of a behavior under different conditions than when the behavior was initially taught, including across multiple people, settings, and time (i.e., maintenance).

Stokes & Baer, 1977
Cannot be assumed, especially for students with ASD and related disabilities.

Students may be able to perform well on one task, but are unable to transfer their learning to a similar task.

**Generalization** is crucial, because it is not possible to teach all the possible situations in which a particular skill or information is needed.

Lewis and Doorlag, 2003
Snell & Brown, 2006

Stages of Learning

Acquisition
Learning it

- Maintenance
  Use it routinely

- Fluency/Proficiency
  Make it faster & better

- Generalization
  Use it however/wherever it is needed
The ability to perform a response over time, even after systematic applied behavior procedures have been withdrawn.

The expansion of a student’s capability of performance beyond those conditions set for initial acquisition.

Stimulus generalization refers to performance under conditions— that is, cues, materials, trainers, and environments— other than those present during acquisition.

Issues with generalization of communication with students with ASD

- Lack of transfer from one function (for example, label) to another (request, reject, etc.)
- Need to teach communication in context and utilizing more than one function to promote generalization

Sigafoos, Drasgow, Reichle, O’Reilly, Green, & Tait (2004)
I29. Instruction on individualized skills is observed within or across primary instructional activities and ongoing routines in the classroom, school, or community (embedded instruction of social interaction skills, communication skills, self-help, etc.).

- For a student that has a communication goal to increase the number choices made, the teacher is observed embedding choices within math by creating the opportunity for the student to request a color of marker; during lunch by choosing what type of milk to drink; and during reading by choosing which book to read.
I30. Generalization of targeted skill is addressed within each lesson [e.g., skills are taught in multiple settings (ex. large/small group), with multiple people (staff/peers), using multiple materials].

Observation

- A student practices conversation skills with peers in the classroom, coworkers at a job site, and with a small group of peers during an extracurricular activity.

Documentation

- Written daily schedule and lesson plans reflect planning for times to access different settings and people/groups in the school to work on identified skills.
- Goals on IEP reflect programming for generalization, by stating when, where, and with whom a skill will be practiced throughout the day.
- An IEP matrix is available which displays multiple opportunities for identified skills to be practiced throughout the day.

I 40. Students have the opportunity to communicate in natural settings with more than one person (e.g., natural settings could be break time in class, hallway, bathroom, lunch, recess, etc.).

- Student is present in natural setting with peers, and student has identified means of communication. If a student has an AAC device for communication, it is present and operable.
I 41. Students’ instructional documentation includes a plan for social inclusion to access multiple settings to increase the opportunity to communicate with peers.

- IEP indicates time in instructional and general access settings other than segregated, special education classrooms with a plan to support communication with peers.
I49 & I50. Staff and peers foster and sustain students’ communicative attempts by responding (a) consistently, (b) in ways consistent with the student’s communicative purpose or motivation, and (c) at the student’s communicative level.

- The student’s identified form of communication is understood by peers, and they respond accordingly. For example, a student uses a communication device to ask a peer, “Can I play with you?” The peer responds by saying, “Sure. We’re going to play Monopoly.”
Programming for generalization

- Lead to increase in spontaneous communication
  - Cowan and Allen (2007)
Natural environments

- Where the student is or will go
- Increase opportunities for communication with others
Behaviors are more likely to generalize when natural consequences are used that do not need to be programmed by the teacher.

Follow student’s interests

Cowan and Allen (2007)
Peers understand communicative attempts.
Peers respond using language the student with ASD understands.
Use peer mediated intervention strategies
  - For more info - NPDC on ASD (website in resource section)
Ensure that goals are valid and can be practiced, maintained, and generalized.

Ensure that activities and routines are designed to address IEP targets.

Plan for supports.

Finding a place for all types of individualized targets...

Isolation → Contextual Instruction
Identify conditions in the acquired skill will need to be performed:
  o Settings
  o Partners
  o Instructions
  o Materials

Collect data on the acquisition of the skill under the initial conditions and then probe for generalization in various conditions where the skill is needed/performed.
Consider communication goals you are currently targeting for a student with ASD or related disability

Identify natural environments during school day

Identify multiple communication partners in each environment

Identify natural reinforcements and any other supports

Collect baseline and implementation data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan — Current goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use 3+ words when requesting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greet peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify when he likes or does not like an object or activity (comment)</td>
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</table>
## Data collection - Baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Circle</th>
<th>Centers</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Recess</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use 3+ words when requesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I Verbal teacher prompt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greet peers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I Verbal teacher prompt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify when he likes or does not like an object or activity (comment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I Peer said “I hate eggs” and he repeated it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Plan — Identify communication partners

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Circle</th>
<th>Centers</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Recess</th>
<th>Music</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greet peers</th>
<th>Bus</th>
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<th>Recess</th>
<th>Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P: Mike and Susan</td>
<td>P: Nathan and Ross A: Ms. Walters</td>
<td>P: rotate 2 peers</td>
<td>P: Bobby and Nicky</td>
<td>P: Scott and Mary</td>
<td>P: Cary and Ella</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P: Bobby and Nicky</td>
<td>P: Scott and Mary</td>
<td>P: Cindy and Alex</td>
<td>P: Paul and Jess</td>
<td>A: Ms. Beacham</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bus</td>
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<td>Centers</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when requesting</td>
<td></td>
<td>*visual supports in lunch line</td>
<td>*Visual support on board</td>
<td>*Visual support</td>
<td>*visual support in lunch line</td>
<td>*peers model and ask</td>
<td>*Visual support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I want ____).</td>
<td>*choice of song</td>
<td>*Peers model and then ask</td>
<td></td>
<td>*swing and slide</td>
<td>*Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greet peers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>P: Kathy and Susan</td>
<td>P: rotate 2 peers</td>
<td>P: Sheldon and Rob</td>
<td>P: Cary and Ella</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*parent prompt</td>
<td>*teacher prompt</td>
<td>*visual support/self monitor</td>
<td>*peer prompt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identify</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>P: Nathan and Ross</td>
<td>P: Bobby and Nicky</td>
<td>P: Scott and Mary</td>
<td>P: Cindy and Alex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>when he likes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>A: Ms. Walters</td>
<td>*peers will model and ask</td>
<td>*visual support/self monitor</td>
<td>*Fading scripts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>or does not</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>*peers will model and ask</td>
<td>*adult will ask and then use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>like an object</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>visual support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>or activity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>if no response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(comment)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greet peers</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify when he likes or does not like an object or activity (comment)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Modify plan based on data
Over time, does communication maintain or increase?
If not, modify plan
Consider:
  o Environments
  o Partners
  o Reinforcement
  o Supports
Questions

It's QUESTION TIME!!


Louisiana Autism Quality Indicator (LAQI) User’s Guide
  - http://www.hdc.lsuhsc.edu/lasard/laqi.html

National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders
  - http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/