Bridging evidence to practise

Receptive Language part 3 Pragmatic Language





Objectives:

- To understand what is meant by pragmatic language
- To understand why someone with language or social communication difficulties might find this area of language difficult
- To develop understanding of how to support someone who finds understanding of pragmatic language difficult
- To feel confident supporting understanding of pragmatic language needs in a classroom setting.
- To begin target setting and group planning for a specific student.













What is Pragmatic Language?

@MrsSpeechieP

HOW WE USE WORDS: greetings, requesting, asking for help or information, knowing how much/how little detail a listener needs to know, how you talk to babies, friends, and authority figures, changing volume dependent on location, revises when someone doesn't understand the origin of message

Non-verbal language: using and maintaining eye contact, understanding postures and facial expressions, using gestures to facilitate verbal words, understanding personal space, recognising listener's interest in topic and modifying as necessary

Conversation: initiating, staying on topic, taking turns and not dominating, interrupting appropriately, changing topics smoothly, demonstrating reciprocity by providing information for the listeners benefit, and asking questions about the listener's experiences





Form Content word order word meanings word endings the way word meanings speech link together sequencing Use conversation social rules matching language to the situation

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Pragmatic Skills

- 1. Maintaining eye-contact
 - · While attending to the speaker
 - While answering questions
 - · While commenting
- 2. Social greetings
 - Responding to greetings
 - What's up?
 - How are you?
 - Initiating greetings
 - Hello/Goodbye
 - What's your name?
- 3. Conversation starters
 - Excuse me, but...
 - I would like to tell your about...
 - Can you help me with...
- 4. Wait your turn to speak
 - During lecture time
 - In conversations

- 5. Giving others a chance to speak
 - Share a personal experience or comment on a topic
 - Ask a peer a question about the topic
 - Wait for the speaker to finish before adding to the conversation
- 6. Topic maintenance
 - Only talk about one topic at a time
- 7. Ask guestions when confused
 - Ask questions related to the lesson
 - Ask questions while conversing with peers
- 8. Terminating conversations
 - See you tomorrow
 - See ya later
 - I have to go now
 - Bye

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Body Language or Non-Verbal Communication

To understand what someone says, we need to be able to understand the situation and understand the message people are giving us through facial expressions, body movements and hand gestures. This is called body language or non-verbal communication. A proportion of the message is communicated by our bodies and the situation



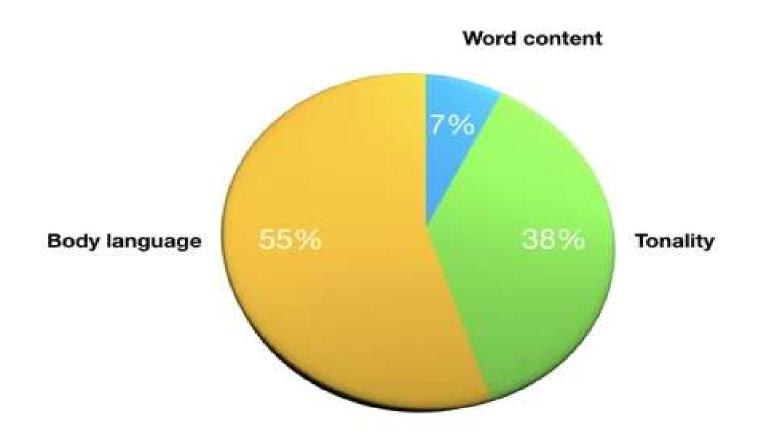


Examples of non-verbal communication:

- Facial expressions
- Pointing (fingers and eyes)
- Whole body positioning
- How fast and how loud we talk
- The tone of voice that we use (happy, sad)
- The rise and fall (pitch) of the voice we use, e.g. our voices tend to rise in pitch at the end when we are asking a question







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Difficulties Using Pragmatic Language ⋄ Using appropriate eye contact Initiating and maintaining conversations - Appropriately greeting others - Joining ongoing activities and conversations Requesting help, various items, etc. ⋄ Difficulty understanding emotions - Reading nonverbal social cues

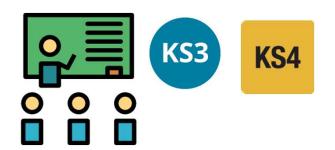
- Perspective taking (how someone might feel in

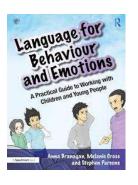
a given situation)

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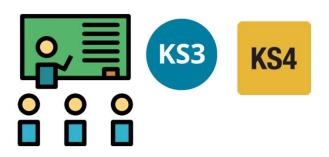


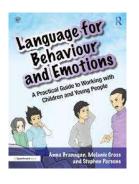




- **1. Understanding language:** vocabulary, grammar and instructions. (Cohen et al, 2013; Buhler et al, 2018)
- **2. Emotional literacy skills:** labelling of own feelings and those of others and managing own emotions with words. (Rieffe & Wiefferink, 2017; van den Bedem et al, 2018a)
- **3. Inferencing and verbal reasoning:** 'reading between the lines' and working out what has been explicitly stated (in conversation and reading) and verbalising one's own thinking. (Hollo et al, 2018)
- **4. Narrative skills: describing real events,** including one's own life story, but also fictional stories. (Pearce et al, 2014; Colozzo et al, 2011)
- **5. Social problem-solving:** using talk to think about how people interact with one another and how to sort out misunderstandings. (Wolters et al, 2014









- 1 Academic success
- 2 The ability to develop positive relationships. Children with SLCN can be at greater risk of being bullied
- 3 Literacy and behaviour 2013
- 4 Mental health
- 3 Self-belief
- 4 Accessing behaviour or mental health interventions

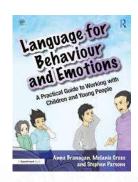
Norbury et al, 2016 Forrest et al, 2018 Van dem Bedem et al, 2018b

Westrupp et al 2020; Peterson et al,

Im-Bolter et al, 2007;
Salmon et al, 2016;
Maggio et al, 2014
Botting et al, 2016
Im-Bolter et al, 2013









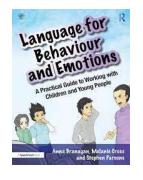
- What to do when things don't make sense (understanding language).
 - Saying when you don't understand (comprehension monitoring).
 - O Understanding words (vocabulary).
 - O When people don't say what they mean (figurative language).
- Talking about feelings (emotional literacy).
 - O What's that feeling called? (naming emotions).
 - O Dealing with feelings (emotional regulation).
- Finding clues and explaining thinking (inference and verbal reasoning).
- The story (narrative).
- Bringing it all together and solving people problems.



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How adults can help

Two traps to be aware of when using *LBFE* are, firstly viewing it as an **intervention** which is delivered in **isolation** and just focusing on **skill development** in the young person alone. Communication happens **across the day** and **within a social context**, so for it to be effective it is about **everyone** who works with the young person **understanding** the **individual's language** and **communication profile** better, and **implementing strategies** to create a **communicatively supportive environment**.

Secondly, language and communication needs **cannot be 'fixed' by one person**. Effective support requires **positive engagement** with the young person and **collaboration** with **professionals and families** to develop skills and strategies. **Teamwork** and **sharing knowledge** are therefore **crucial**.

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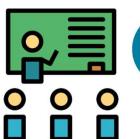
Finding clues and explaining inference:

Inference refers to the listener's (or reader's) ability to "read between the lines" and interpret the speaker's (or writer's) message which has not been explicitly explained. It requires the young person to understand the language they hear (or read) and match that to their own understanding and world knowledge even though the meaning may be hidden.

Inference can be based on:

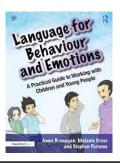
- Non-verbal cues such as facial expressions
- Situational understanding (What would I expect to happen if I was in this situation?)
- Language











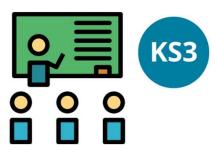


Level A	At this level the young person selects information from what is provided, so it is very much based in the 'here and now'. The young person does not need to use any specific world knowledge, they just need to listen to what is said and look at what they see and then identify the right information. More abstract questions may also be used but only if directly related to the child's own experiences: for example, 'How did you feel when?' At this level the young person is selecting the right information, either from the story they are listening to, a picture they are looking at or remembering what has happened to them.	
Level B	The young person selects information from what is presented and combines this with their world knowledge. They must organise their thoughts into a logical sequence. This stage requires simple inferences and predictions. Any inference about information not explicitly stated is simple and obvious.	
Level C	This language level requires the young person to use 'language to predict , reflect on and integrate ideas and relationships ' (Bla et al, 1978). This is true language for thinking . The key question at this level is 'why?' , for example, 'Why will X happen?' and 'Why shouldn't?' The young person is also expected to talk about a variety of possible outcomes that may not be immediately obvious (such as 'What would she do if?' as well as reflect on his own understanding (e.g.: 'How can you tell?').	
Level D	This is an extension of the level <i>C</i> skills with more demanding reasoning and greater in-depth reflection . This language level requires precise analysis of the social situation as well as thorough, well-reasoned responses . The language load is increased by the use of complex vocabulary , such as 'evidence, conclusion, justify, suspect and consequences .' Multiple perspectives need to be analysed and/or require multiple steps . E.g. 'what is the best solution for everyone?', 'If you considerate from XX's view, does that change your opinion? How?' and 'Tell me how they would resolve their differences. Talk through the steps.'	

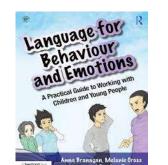
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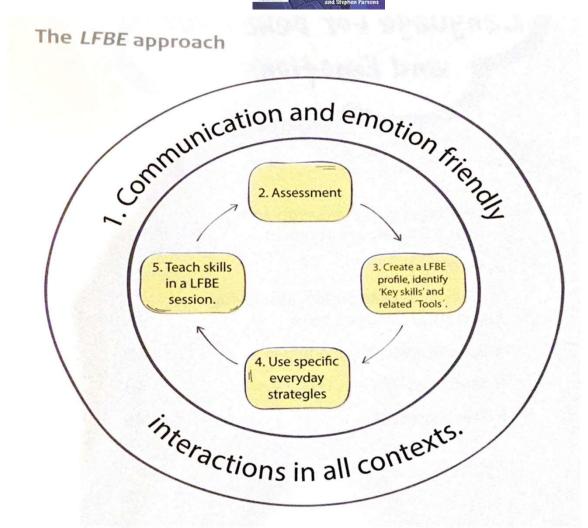
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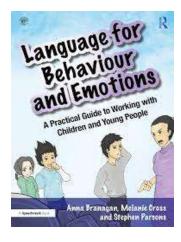
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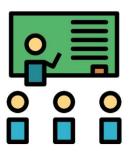




Creating a communication and emotion friendly environment.

- Playful: relax, be genuine and enjoy the interaction
- Accepting: everyone has a voice
- **Curious:** be interested in the young person and what they have to say
- **Empathic:** try to see it from the other person's point of view
- Patient: give others time

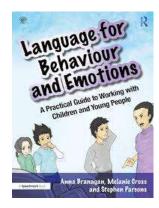












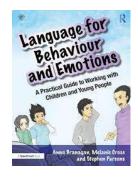
Creating a communication and emotion friendly environment.

- Communication strategies: Non verbal communication, listening, language and visual support, check understanding
- Emotional coaching strategies: Create an environment where it feels comfortable to talk, accept emotions, build body awareness, recognise, label and explore emotions, don't get too attached to your feelings
- Use talk to extend young people's thinking







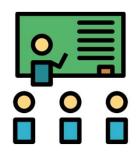




Using talk to extend young people's thinking

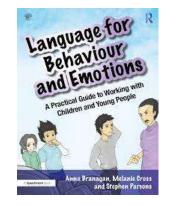
- Have a 'to and fro' conversation which allows one speaker to build on what the previous speaker has said.
- **Do not allow** anyone, including adults, to **dominate the conversation**. In one to one conversations aim for **50:50**.
- Adults should guide the conversation by facilitating and modelling, not telling or directing.
- **Respond** to the young people's ideas with **encouragement**, for example 'tell me more about that' rather than opinions or answers.
- **Ground rules** should be **clear**: have **explicit** agreements about listening, turn taking and respecting others' views. **Everyone** has a **voice** and their **views** are **equally valid**.
- Use words that talk about what's going on **inside people's heads**, such as 'think, know, believe, remember, reflect, and consider.'
- Use **open** questions like 'what do you think she is feeling?', rather than closed questions e.g. 'is she sad?'
- **Encourage self-reflection** by asking questions like 'how well did you do?', 'how did you solve that problem?', ;what helped you?'
- Aim for improvement by asking 'what would you do better or differently next time?'
- **Generalise the learning** away from this conversation: 'where can you apply what you learnt today?', 'who can you tell about what you learnt? What will you say?'













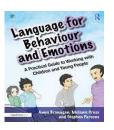
Teaching skills in a session:

- One to one: as part of a tailored intervention programme allow very specific skill development.
- Small groups: group members take turns answering questions and offering alternative views
- Larger group/whole class: project the image and use it as a basis for drama, debate, or social skills programmes











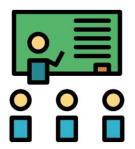
General guide for a small group:

Session frequency	Twice per week is recommended		
Before the session	Complete individual assessment and profile in order to identify the language level, identify one key skill to target, and identify and photocopy the selected tools		
Very first session	Set group rules, explain the purpose of the group, introduce one tool from the toolkit, and start at scenario 1 and work through in order		
Starting subsequent sessions	Review key learning from last session, review and remind students of strategies they are learning and associated tools		
Using the scenarios	Present the picture and story, select questions at appropriate level and take turns in answering. Both adult and young person should ask and answer questions , questions should be asked from left to right , focus on discussion about issues raised rather than a "right answer". Model the process of answering the question. Don't write down what the young person says		
Using the tools from the toolkit	Each student will have a profile from which a key skill to focus on can be identified. Pick one key skill for the group as whole. Only introduce one tool per session. Provide examples of how each tool can be used. Gradually reduce support given in the session and let the session become more student led. Provide feedback and opportunities for discussion		
End of the session	Answer the last question which links to the main point of the scenario back to the student's lives. Recap the learning and how this applies to the student's life. Encourage self-reflection by asking questions.		
After the session	Support generalisation by ensuring that everyone (families and professionals) who interact with the student knows the skills being targeted. A photocopy could be given to students to discuss with friends, a learning journal is established to write in each week. Send contact to parents with key tasks to practise.		

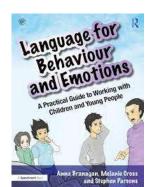
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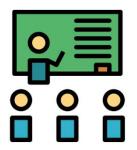
Reassessment

Reassessment should be completed **every 20 scenarios**, by using another assessment scenario and by asking the young person to **reflect** on their **skills** using the 'how well did I do' assessment (page 123). This will allow **monitoring** of their progress and further **tailoring** of the intervention. The assessment scenarios increase in length and complexity. The table following outlines which assessment to use.

	Assessment scenario	Young person's views
After scenarios 1 – 20 are complete	Assessment scenario 2	How well did I do?
After scenarios 21 – 40 are complete	Assessment scenario 3	How well did I do?
After scenarios 41 – 60 are complete	Assessment scenario 4	How well did I do?

If a young person is not making progress then effort should be made to pinpoint the factors that are hindering this. If not already completed, a complete *LFBE* assessment should be conducted. If major concerns persist then referral to specialists is recommended.













Multiple meanings and jokes



Why did the teacher wear sunglasses?







Because her students were too bright!













Too bright means:

The students were very clever The students were wearing really colourful clothes













My Personal Experience with Understanding Sarcasm

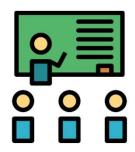
I remember as a young boy on the spectrum in computer class and hearing a joke that I didn't find funny. It was a sarcastic joke by our teacher and while everyone else in the class laughed I was there completely blank. A girl looked at me after the joke had stopped like I had three heads.

To fit in, I'd often laugh whenever my peers would laugh so I could be part of the group.

Are you joking or are you serious became a common challenge for me during my adolescence.

"Conditions including autism, closed head injuries, brain lesions and schizophrenia can interfere with the ability to perceive sarcasm." - Smithsonian Magazine













Not Perceiving Sarcasm Can Lead to Social Missteps

Unfortunately, due to my lack of understanding sarcasm, I would often befriend bullies who I thought wanted to be my friends. For example, I was overweight when I was a child and I tried to befriend a kid that would say "Oh, Kerry, you are so skinny," and I'd take that as a compliment.

















Woman: 'Oh! Auntie Vera's come to visit.'

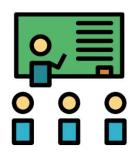
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Example 1: 'Good shot Jonny!'

Adult: What are the boys doing? (context) Child: They are playing football in the park.

Adult: Something has gone wrong, hasn't it? Child: One of the boys has kicked the ball into the pond.

Adult: And what is the other boy saying? Let's read it. (literal interpretation) Child: 'Good shot Jonny.'

Adult: Do you play football? When do you normally say to someone 'good shot'? Child: When someone scores a goal.

Adult: Yes. We mean... good kick... or... good goal. So was this a good kick? Child; No!

Adult: Why not?

Child: Because the boy kicked the ball into the water and they can't play football any more!

Adult: That's right! So I wonder why his friend is saying 'good shot'? It wasn't a good shot at all! I think he is being sarcastic. 'Being sarcastic' means saying the opposite of what you really mean. What would the boy have said when his friend kicked the ball into the pond? 'Good shot'? Or 'rubbish shot'? Child: Rubbish shot!

Adult Let's look at how the boy is saying 'good shot', (sarcasm through Intonation) If your friend scored a goal and you shouted 'Good shot!', how would you do it? (encourage the child to show a strong level of enthusiasm raise their voice, smile, raise their arms, clap, etc.)

Child: 'Good shot!!!'

Adult: That's right. Now look and listen to how this boy is saying it. 'Good shot!' (say It in a sarcastic manner, and also fold your arms and shake your head) How did I say it differently?

(Discuss together that you were saying it more slowly, that your body language was different, etc.)

Adult: So let's look at this picture again, (sarcasm in context) Tell me what is

happening and what the boy is saying.

Child: One of the boys has kicked the football into the pond. His friend says

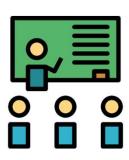
(encourage the child to say the dialogue in a sarcastic way) but what he really means is that it was a rubbish shot.

Adult: That's right. He is being sarcastic.

Sarcasm: People Say the Funniest Things, Pragt3. © Holen Rippon, Black Sheep Press Ltd, 2012. Black Sheep Pmax, Gf, Middeton, Cowling, Keigriey, W. Yorks, 8022 000; England. Tel. 44(9)/525 031340; email: almittéackaheepproex.co.uk; web: www.blackahe B. is cely parmitted for the Scenses shown below to printiphotocopy these worksheets for use in their clinickchool. See page 3 for full details of the Scenon condition

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Idioms Language Program

Pull up Your Socks On a Shoestring In One's Shoes Setting: My father said, To truly understand Setting: My parents traveled throughout Setting: My teacher was very annoyed when he how other people feel you need to walk in their said to me, 'It's time for you to *pull up your socks* Vietnam and Thailand on a shoestring, and had shoes for a while." and start working hard." a great time. In one's shoes means... Pull up your socks means... On a shoestring means... a) Make a decent and sustained effort on a task a) To walk using someone else's shoes a) Tying your wallet to your belt with string b) To be in another person's place or position b) To warm your cold legs b) Surviving well on a very small amount of money c) To be aware of walking in your own shoes c) To continue working as before c) To have large amounts of money and spend it all Idioms: Clothes Idioms: Clothes Idioms: Clothes Put Your Thinking Cap on Tighten Your Belt The Shoe is on the Other Foot Setting: The ship was caught in a storm at sea. Setting: My sister teased me when I had to visit Setting: My mother said, Your father has had The captain yelled above the roaring wind, 'We the dentist. Now the shoe was on the other foot his hours at work cut back. That means we all need to put our thinking caps on if we are to - it was her turn to visit the dentist. survive this storm." have to tighten our belts." Put your thinking cap on means... The shoe is on the other foot means ... Tighten your belt means... a) To place a special cap on your head that aids a) It's the sister's turn to visit the dentist a) To lose weight b) The sister was wearing the wrong shoes b) To spend money without care b) To think long and hard and decisively about c) Places and roles are reversed c) To live on less money than usual something c) To make a hasty decision about something Idioms: Clothes Idioms: Clothes Idioms: Clothes

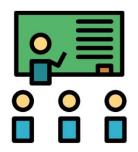
© David Newmonic Language Resources

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11







Useful links for further support:

Websites:

Twinkl

www.twinkl.co.uk

Books

Black Sheep Press <u>www.blacksheeppress.co.uk</u>

- Practical Pragmatics
- Think about it
- Talking about school
- Talking about secondary school
- Talking about social and emotional skills
- Speech Bubbles

Think it Say It: Andrew Martin, Luanne Martin 1990

Language for Thinking: Anna Branagan, Stephen Parsons 2005

Language for Behaviour and Emotions: Anna Branagan, Melanie Cross, Stephen Parsons 2021

Inference Activities 2nd Edition: David Newman

Idioms Cloud 9: David Newman

Don't Take it so literally: Danielle Legler 2001

Saying one thing, Meaning another: Cecil Cyrul Spector 1997







What strategy, idea or approach could you start implementing immediately with the student you support?

Please share your ideas with colleagues, family, or people you are watching this with.





Target Setting		
What aspect of language understanding is the priority for your student?		
When can the support be implemented, in the classroom, 1:1 or group work?		
Who would be best placed to carry out the intervention? Other students in a group?		



Examples of a target for inference:

To be able to demonstrate the ability to make inferences in response to a picture in a structured session, 80% of the time.

To make inferences from short paragraphs of information, using strategies e.g. visualising, underlining key words to support their understanding in a structured session, 80% of the time.

Example of a target for non-literal language:

To understand and use idioms in response to a picture in a structured session, 80% of the time.





Example of a target for understanding sarcasm:

To understand sarcasm in a structured session, 80% of the time.

Example of a target for ambiguous language and multiple meanings:

To identify and use a strategy to understand ambiguous language 8/10 times





Therapy and beyond....

Generalisation:

- Idiom/joke of the day
- Finding idioms/jokes/ambiguous language in texts (such as English)
- Video clips You Tube, TV shows
- Newspaper headlines
- Joke books
- Class sarcasm sign
- Real life activities set up a crime scene in the classroom and become detectives!
- Social detective mind maps





Acknowledgements

- @MrsSpeechieP
- Black Sheep Press: Speech Bubbles
- Black Sheep Press: Sarcasm: People say the funniest things
- Language for Thinking: Anna Branagan, Stephen Parsons 2005
- Language for Behaviour and Emotions: Anna Branagan, Melanie Cross, Stephen Parsons 2021
- Inference Activities 2nd Edition: David Newman
- Reading and Thinking: Learning materials Ltd 2000
- Idioms Cloud 9: David Newman





School advice sessions

School advice sessions can be booked on our website

<u>Home - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website (buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)</u>

Follow this link

Speech and language therapy virtual advice sessions - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website (buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)

