Strategies to Increase Success for AAC Users Including Students with ASD (Musselwhite, 2008)

Model, Model, Model!

How many times do you think the typically developing child heard a model of ‘Daddy’ in context, by multiple communication partners, before s/he first said “da da”? Yet, we often lament after less than three months (and minimal integrated models!), that “she just doesn’t get this device.” While communication partners are urged to model AAC use interactively (Beukelman & Garrett, 1988; Goossens’, Crain, & Elder, 1992; Musselwhite & St. Louis, 1982), and while research shows that modeling AAC use is helpful (Romski & Sevcik, 1996), Light (1997) cites several studies indicting that partners use AAC modeling in less than 10% of their messages, even when given specific instruction to do so. Communication partners should model vocabulary not yet in student’s expressive lexicons and sentence structures that are “... just beyond the current productions of the child, although within the child’s receptive capabilities” (Light, 1997, p. 168).

Use ‘Smart Charts’

One reason often given for failure to model is that communication partners don’t know the location of words on the student’s communication device. The ‘smart charts’ shown below provide visual support to facilitators regarding where to find vocabulary.

Note: Samples from software for PRC devices, www.prentrom.com

Note: Samples from software for the V, www.dynavoxtech.com

Musselwhite, 2008  www.aacintervention.com
References

(Musselwhite, 2007) www.aacintervention.com


Musselwhite, C. & St. Louis, K. Communication Programming for Persons with Severe Handicaps. Austin, TX: Pro Ed.


Musselwhite, 2008 www.aacintervention.com
Resources for Students with ASD
(Musselwhite & Wagner, 2007)  www.aacintervention.com


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