



Abstract
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Pragmatic Language for Everyday Living

Dr. McGreevy will describe how Essential for Living teaches pragmatic, verbal and non-verbal language to children and adults with moderate-to-severe disabilities, including but not limited to autism. These children may be 'stuck in level 2' of the VB-MAPP, may have difficulty acquiring abstract concepts and conditional discriminations, and may seldom experience verbal mediation, generalization, or equivalence relations. Essential for Living guides users to teach mands, listener responses to mands and text, and multipli-controlled tacts and intraverbals in contexts similar to those that occur in everyday living, without the addition of grammar and syntax. Objectives:

1. Participants will describe the barriers experienced by children 'stuck in level 2'
2. Participants will describe the components of pragmatic language described in Essential for Living
3. Participants will describe how these components are different from those in developmental instruments

Reading and Responding to Text as a Listener in Everyday Living

Children and adults with moderate-to-severe disabilities, including but not limited to autism, are often taught 'reading' skills. Most of these learners with understandable spoken-word and controlled echoic repertoires, will find phonetic reading almost impossible to acquire. While sight words can be acquired with practice, reading is not generative, and understanding (i.e., comprehension) is often not concurrent. For learners who use signs as their primary method of speaking, phonetic reading is not possible, but, as with vocal-verbal learners, sight words can be acquired, but understanding is often not concurrent. For learners who use pictures as their primary method of speaking, no form of reading is possible. The pictures, however, may suggest a degree of understanding.

Dr. McGreevy will suggest that 'responding to text as a listener' as originally described by B. F. Skinner, and as recently described in Essential for Living, can be acquired by many of these learners through matching text to items or pictures and may actually be more functional than reading. Objectives:

1. Participants will describe the three components of the task of reading
2. Participants will describe why many learners have difficulty understanding what they have read
3. Participants will describe why 'responding to text as a listener' can be more functional than 'reading'