

Speech Deficits in Adults with Autism

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Overview



Autism



Autism speech deficits



Social cognition in ASD



Theory of mind and challenges





Conclusion

Autism



Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that can affect communication, social interaction and behavior



Autism Speech Deficits



1. Delayed language development
2. Impaired conversational skills: turn-taking, initiating and maintaining conversation
3. Echolalia
4. Pronoun reversal
5. Difficulty with abstract language
6. Monotonous tone
7. Visual thinking
8. Attention to detail

Treatment

- **Speech Therapy**
- **Social Skills Training:** conversation skills, listening skills, nonverbal communication (group, individual, role play)
- **Augmentative and alternative communication methods (AAC):** visual support,



Augmentative and alternative communication methods (AAC)





- Visual support: picture schedule, social story
- Technology-assisted communication: email, text messaging, social media
- AAC: communication board, speech generating device
- Peer-mediated intervention: coaching on how to initiate

Social Cognition in ASD



It refers to the mental processing involved in perceiving, interpreting, and responding to social information, including social cues and emotions, as well as the ability to understand the thoughts, feelings, and intention of others



Social cognition levels



- Social comprehension: TOM
- Social perception: emotion recognition
- Social orienting: motivation
- Automatic social functioning

Intervention and Assessment



- Reading the mind in the eyes test (RMET)
- Social cognition and interaction training (SCIT): apply this method in group therapy (ER, perspective-taking, problem-solving, role-playing, video feedback, assignment)

Theory of Mind



- It refers to the ability to understand and interpret the mental states of oneself and others, including beliefs, desires, emotions, and intentions.
- It is a fundamental aspect of social cognition and communication, allowing individuals to navigate complex social interactions and understand the perspective of others.

TOM Challenges



- Difficulties interpreting nonverbal cues: facial expression, tone of voice, body language
- Difficulties understanding perspective-taking:
- Literal interpretation: sarcasm irony or figurative language
- Difficulty with social problem-solving: unwritten rules of social interaction, inappropriate responses in social situations
- Difficulty with empathy

Treatment of TOM



- Social skills training
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Communication-base intervention: social stories or video modeling
- Assistive technology: virtual reality, augmented reality

Assessing TOM in ASD



- False belief tasks: Sally-Anne task
- Strange stories: social dilemmas
- Cartoon-based tasks
- Emotion recognition tasks: facial expression or tone of voice
- Social problem-solving tasks: social dilemmas
- Theory of Mind Inventory (TOMI)
- Clinical observation and interviews

Conclusion



- TOM deficits are a core characteristics of ASD and can contribute to challenges in social interaction, communication, and emotional regulation
- Early and targeted interventions can help individuals with ASD, develop and improve their TOM abilities



THANK YOU

