Understanding and Nurturing the Communicative Competence of Learners with Significant Disabilities: Part I

Slide 1

Understanding and Nurturing the Communicative Competence of Learners with Significant Disabilities: Part I

Montana Deaf-Blind Project Webinar Series

August 2020

Philip D. Schweigert

Slide 2

- Characteristics of meaningful assessment
- Framework for the development of expressive communication
- The Communication Matrix
- Implications for instruction

Slide 3
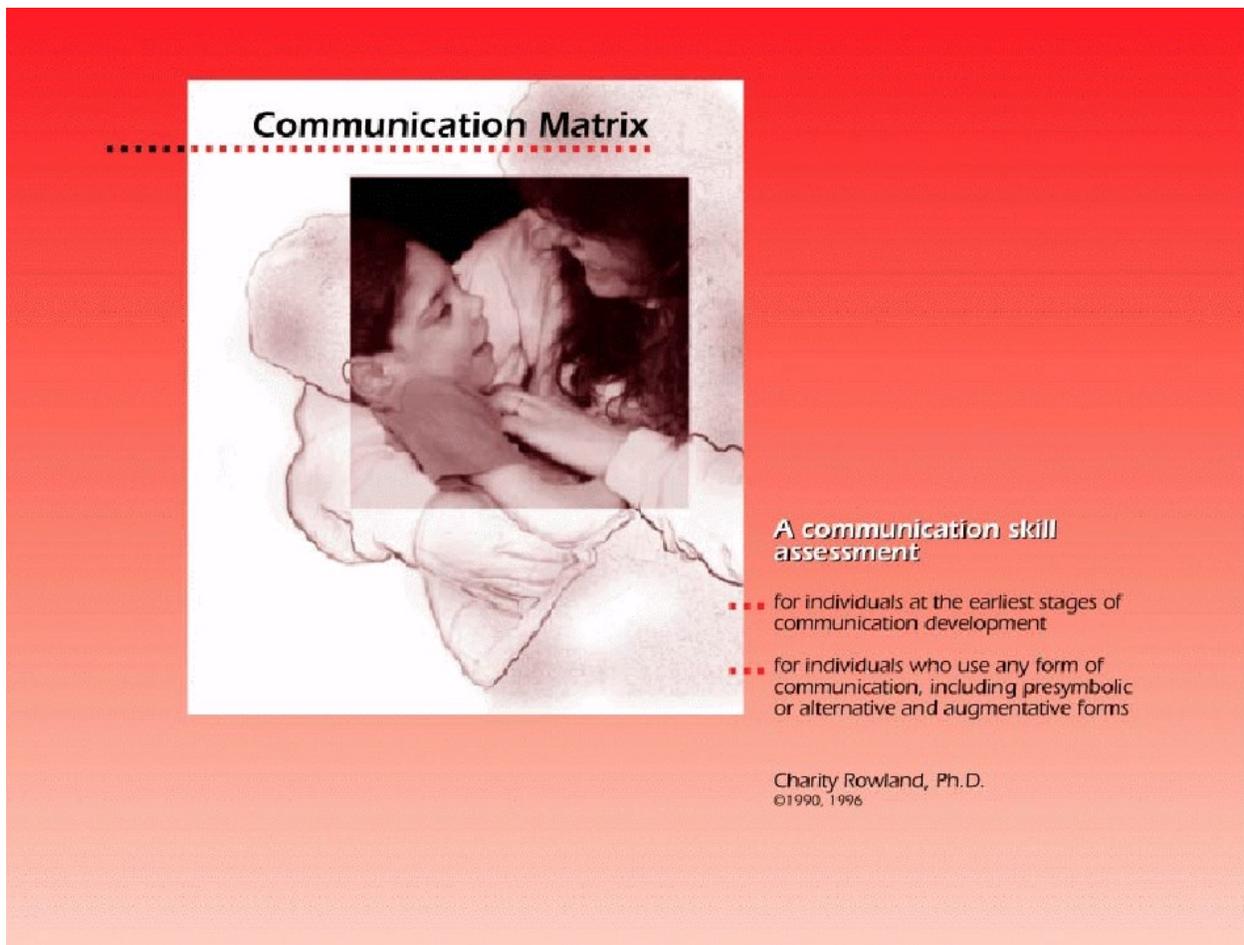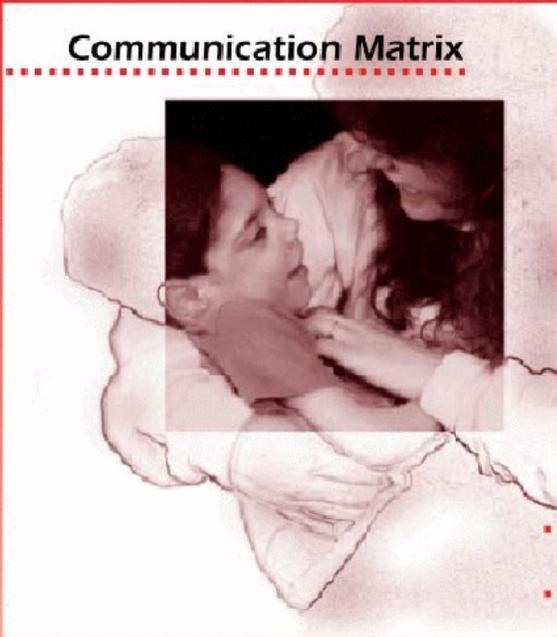
Slide 4

Four Elements of Communication

(see pages 3-4 <u>First things First</u>)
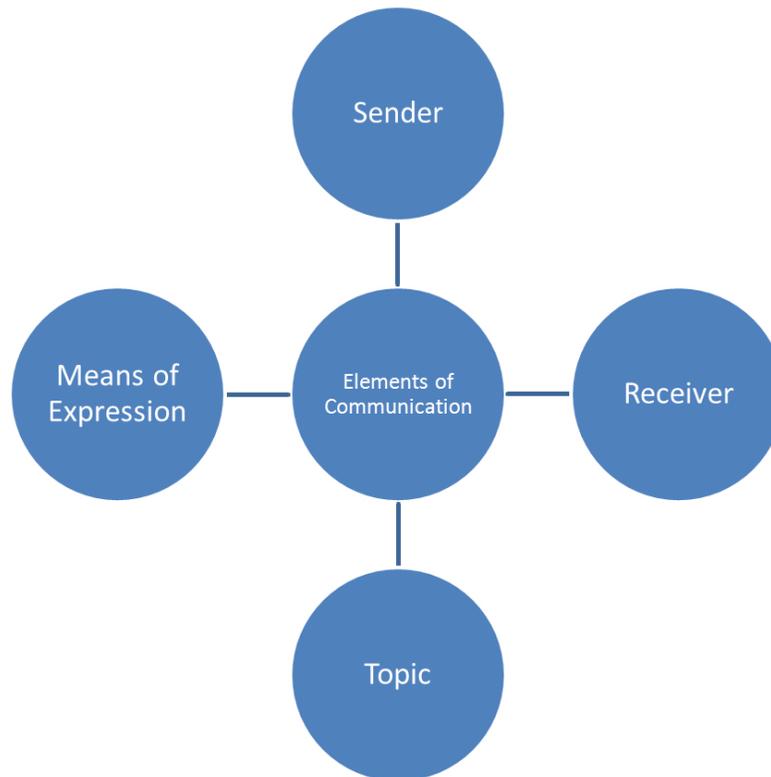
Slide 5

Sender Element:

- Perception of self occurs through interaction with people, knowledge of surroundings, and mastery of skills.
- The recognition of the association between one's behavior and environmental outcomes is critical for future learning.
   (Watson, 1966)

Slide 6

Receiver Element

Critical components of partner responsivity include (Wilcox, 1995):

- Sensitivity: The recognition of communicative or potentially communicative behavior
- Contingency: Contextually related and timely responses to potentially communicative behavior
- Consistency: Responding to the same behavior in the same ways, over time

Slide 7

Topic Element

– Accessible
  – Motivation
  – Repeated experiences

Slide 8

The act of reference emerges not as an individual act but as a social one (Werner and Kaplan 1963)
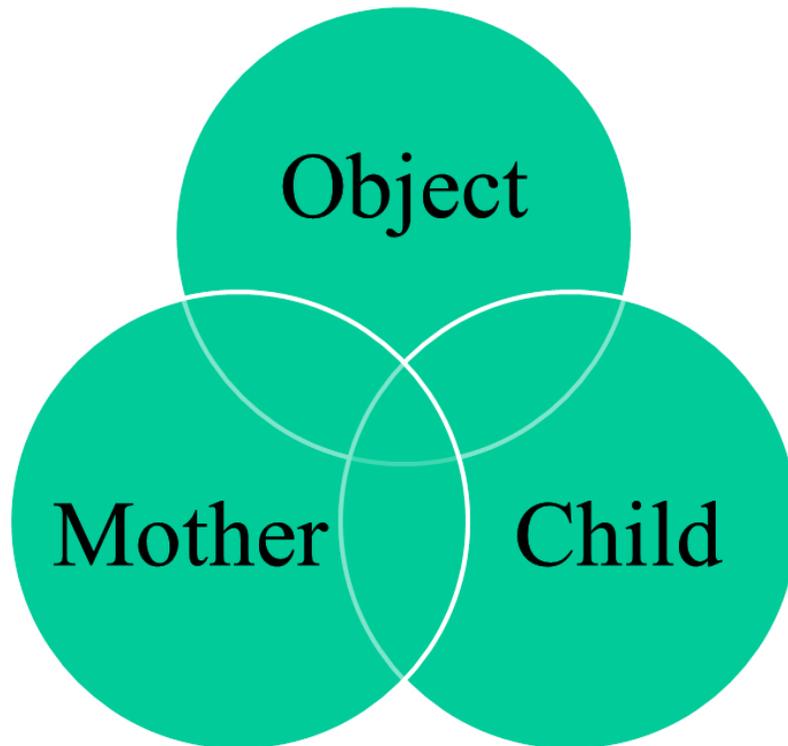
Communication is supported through the shared histories people bring to their interactions (De Thorne et al 2014)

Slide 9

Means of Expression Element

"when the focus is on successful communication, the form is reduced to its proper place of being a means toward an end, rather than the end itself" (De Thorne et al 2014)

Slide 10

Progressive Distancing

- **Decontextualization**: spatial in a place other than here; and temporal from a time other than right now

- **Denaturalization**: decreasing similarity between symbol and what it represents

Slide 11

Dual Representation:

- Seeing the picture (or object symbol) as both a thing by itself
- And realizing that it also stands for something

Symbolic Sensitivity:

- The generalization of the concept of symbolic representation
- … "If this stands for this then can this stand for ….."

Slide 12

Intentional Communication:

- Implies

  - Intentional behavior

  - Purposefully directed toward another person with intended meaning

- Requires dual orientation to both the communication partner and the topic

Slide 13

Pivotal juncture of coordinated attention

- The transition from pre-intentional to intentional communication is a developmental milestone second to none
- It marks children's entry as full participants in the social milieu around them and triggers other transactional processes that in a short time lead to symbolic communication

(Warren & Yoder, 1999)

Slide 14

Characteristics of Intentional Communication:

- Persistence
- Repetition
- Alternating Gaze (body orientation, leaning toward)
- Changing the signal used
- Awaiting a response
- Terminating the signal when responded to
- Indicating satisfaction or dissatisfaction to response (Wetherby& Prizant 1989)

Slides 15-16

Development of Communicative Intent

Level of Communication	Pragmatic Features
Level 1: Pre-intentional (Reactive) Behavior	STATES expressed by behaviors (as interpreted by caregivers): discomfort; comfort; interest/excitement
Level 2: Intentional (Pro-active) Behavior	FUNCTIONS that behaviors serve (as interpreted by caregivers): protest/reject; continue pleasurable action; obtain more of something; attract attention
Level 3: Unconventional Pre-symbolic Communication	INTENTS for which behaviors are used by child: Refuse/reject; Request more of an action; Request a new action; Request more of an object; Request a new object; Request attention; Show affection
Level 4: Conventional Pre-symbolic Communication	All of the previous intents plus: greetings; offer/share; direct another person's attention to something; polite forms (please, thank you); confirm/negate (yes/no); ask questions
Level 5: Concrete Symbolic Communication	All of previous intents plus: request absent object; label
Level 6: Abstract Symbolic Communication	All of previous intents plus: comment
Level 7:	All of previous intents

Communication Intervention for Children with Severe and Multiple Disabilities

Charity Rowland, PhD., & Philip Schweigert, M.Ed.

Oregon Health & Science University

Design to Learn Projects

1600 SE Ankeny, Portland, Oregon

Slide 17
Same as Slide 3

Slide 18

COMMUNICATION MATRIX PROFILE

Charity Rowland, Ph.D.
©1990, 1996, 2004

Slide 19

Scoring options for communication matrix

Mastered: individual produces behavior independently and consistently when an opportunity occurs.

On profile: shade in cells if at least one behavior is mastered for specific state/function/intent.

May use stripes for cells if one or more behaviors is at emerging stage.

Slide 20

Assessment of Early Communication

www.communicationmatrix.org

Dr. Charity Rowland

THE COMMUNICATION MATRIX

About　Results　Custom Report　Support　Contact　FAQ

Communication Assessment
for Parents & Professionals

An easy to use assessment instrument designed for individuals of all ages who function at the earliest stages of communication and who use any form of communication.

FREE

Download the entire handbook.
Need Adobe Reader?, get it here.

[Try It Now]　[Create your account]

Home	About	Results	Support	Custom Report	FAQ
Try it now	Video: Introduction	Video: Understanding Results	Video: Entering Data	About the Report (Beta version)	Change my email address or password?