

II. Impairments in Language Skills

A. Impairment in the *pragmatic* use of language. This refers to the inability to use language in a social sense as a way to interact/communicate with other people. It is important to observe the individual's use of language in various settings with various people (especially peers). Since the impairments are in pragmatic language usage

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Uses conversation to convey facts and information about special interests, rather than to convey thoughts, emotions, or feelings. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Uses language scripts or verbal rituals in conversation, often described as "nonsense talk" by others (scripts may be made up or taken from movies/books/TV). At times, the scripts are subtle and may be difficult to detect. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Has difficulty initiating, maintaining, and ending conversations with others. E.g.: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Focuses conversations on one narrow topic, with too many details given, or moves from one seemingly unrelated topic to the next. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Once a discussion begins it is as if there is no "stop" button; must complete a predetermined dialogue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | c. Knows how to make a greeting, but has no idea how to continue the conversation; the next comment may be one that is totally irrelevant. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | d. Does not make conversations reciprocal (has great difficulty with the back-and-forth aspect), attempts to control the language exchange, may leave a conversation before it is concluded. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | e. Does not inquire about others when conversing. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Is unsure how to ask for help/make requests/make comments. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Fails to inquire regarding others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Makes comments that may embarrass others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | c. Interrupts others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | d. Engages in obsessive questioning or talking in one area, lacks interest in the topics of others. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | e. Has difficulty maintaining the conversation topic. |

B. Impairment in the *semantic* use of language. This refers to understanding the language being used.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Displays difficulty understanding not only individual words, but conversations and material read. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Displays difficulty with problem solving. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Displays difficulty analyzing/synthesizing information presented. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Does not ask for the meaning of an unknown word. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Uses words in a peculiar manner. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | c. Is unable to make or understand jokes/teasing. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | d. Creates jokes that make no sense. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | e. Interprets known words on a literal level (concrete thinking). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | f. Has a large vocabulary consisting mainly of nouns and verbs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | g. Creates own words, using them with great pleasure in social situations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | h. Has difficulty discriminating between fact and fantasy. |

C. Impairment in *prosody*. This refers to the pitch, stress, and rhythm of an individual's voice.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Rarely varies the pitch, stress, rhythm, or melody of his speech. Does not realize this can convey meaning. |
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<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Has a voice pattern that is often described as robotic or as the “little professor”; in children, the rhythm of speech is more adultlike than childlike.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Displays difficulty with volume control (too loud or too soft).
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Uses the voice of a movie or cartoon character conversationally and is unaware that this is inappropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Has difficulty understanding the meaning conveyed by others when they vary their pitch, rhythm, or tone.
D. Impairment in the <i>processing</i> of language. This refers to one’s ability to comprehend what has been said. The Asperger individual has difficulty absorbing, analyzing, and then responding to the information.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. When processing language (which requires multiple channels working together), has difficulty regulating just one channel, difficulty discriminating between relevant and irrelevant information.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Has difficulty shifting from one channel to another; processing is slow and easily interrupted by any environmental stimulation (seen as difficulty with topic maintenance). This will appear as distractibility or inattentiveness. (Note: When looking at focusing issues it is very difficult to determine the motivator. It could be attributed to one or a few of the following reasons: lack of interest, fantasy involvement, anxiety, or processing difficulty.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Displays a delay when answering questions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Displays difficulty sustaining attention and is easily distracted (one might be discussing plants and the Asperger individual will ask a question about another country — something said may have triggered this connection or the individual may still be in an earlier conversation).
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Displays difficulty as language moves from a literal to a more abstract level (generalization difficulties found in the Asperger population are, in part, due to these processing difficulties).

VI. Sensory Sensitivities. This refers to any abnormalities of the senses an individual may have.

A. Abnormalities in sight, sound, smell, touch, or taste. The Asperger individual generally has difficulty in at least one of these areas, though the degree will vary from person to person. Some individuals may have difficulty in multiple or even all areas. He perceives ordinary sensations as unbearably intense. He will begin to anticipate these experiences, feeling anxious well before the experience occurs. It will be very important to determine if the response is due to sensory or behavioral (learned) difficulties. Often a behavior may initially stem from sensory difficulties, but then become a learned behavior (habit). How you address the behavior will depend on which it is.

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Has difficulty in visual areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Engages in intense staring.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Avoids eye contact.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Stands too close to objects or people.
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Displays discomfort/anxiety when looking at certain pictures (the individual feels as if the visual experience is closing in on him).
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Has difficulty in auditory areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Covers ears when certain sounds are made.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Displays extreme fear when unexpected noises occur.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Displays an inability to focus when surrounded by multiple sounds (shopping mall, airport, party).
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Purposely withdraws to avoid noises.
<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Is fearful of the sounds particular objects make (vacuum, blender, DustBuster).
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Has difficulty in olfactory areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Finds some smells so overpowering or unpleasant that he becomes nauseated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Displays a strong olfactory memory.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Can recognize smells before others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Needs to smell foods before eating them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Needs to smell materials before using them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Has difficulty in tactile areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Has difficulty when touched by others, even lightly (especially shoulders and head).
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Displays anxiety when touched unexpectedly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Complains of clothing feeling like sandpaper.
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Has difficulty accepting new clothing (including for change of seasons).
<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Has difficulty with clothing seams or tags.
<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Does not respond to temperature appropriately.
<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Underreacts to pain.
<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Overreacts to pain.
<input type="checkbox"/>	i. Has difficulty using particular materials (glue, paint, clay).
<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Complains of a small amount of wetness (from the water fountain, a small spill).
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Has difficulty in gustatory areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Makes limited food choices.

<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Will only tolerate foods of a particular texture or color.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Needs to touch foods before eating them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Displays unusual chewing and swallowing behaviors.
<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Has rigidity issues tied in with limited food preferences (this is the food I always have — it is always this brand and it is always prepared and presented in this way).
<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Cannot allow foods to touch each other on the plate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Must eat each individual food in its entirety before the next.
<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Has an easily activated gag/vomit reflex.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Engages in self-stimulatory behaviors (rocking, hand movements, facial grimaces).
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Is oversensitive to environmental stimulation (changes in light, sound, smell, location of objects).
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Is undersensitive to environmental stimulation (changes in light, sound, smell, location of objects).

IV. Motor Clumsiness. This refers to difficulties with motor functioning and planning. The Asperger individual can have difficulty with both gross and fine motor skills.

A. Difficulties with gross motor skills.

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. An awkward gait when walking or running.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Poor balance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Difficulty when throwing or catching a ball (appears afraid of the ball).
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Difficulty coordinating different extremities, motor planning (shoe tying, bike riding).
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Difficulty with motor imitation skills.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Difficulty with rhythm copying.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Difficulty with skipping.

B. Difficulties with fine motor skills

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Difficulty with handwriting/cutting/coloring skills.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. An unusual pencil/pen grasp.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Rushes through fine motor tasks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Difficulty applying sufficient pressure when writing, drawing, or coloring.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Difficulty with independently seeing sequential steps to complete finished product.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Frustration if writing samples are not perfectly identical to the presented model.