Communication & Swallowing
MSA, CBD & PSP

Dr. Heather Clark, Ph.D.  CCC-SLP BC-ANCDS
Certificate of Clinical Competence, Speech-Language Pathology
Board Certified by the Academy of Neurology Communication Disorders and Sciences

Cure PSP and Mayo Clinic
Family Conference
June 30, 2018

Idea
Put into Words
Give the Instructions for Moving
Carry Out the Instructions for Moving

Hear the sounds
Recognize the words
Understand the message
Idea

Put Into Words

Give the Instructions for Moving

Carry Out the Instructions for Moving

Recognize the Words

Hear the Sounds

Understand the Message

IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION:
• Poor eye contact
• Poor use and understanding of nonverbal aspects of communication
  • Facial expression
  • Tone of voice
• Impulsivity

COGNITIVE DIFFICULTIES:
• Memory
• Attention
• Concentration
• Decision Making

IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION:
• Poor eye contact
• Poor use and understanding of nonverbal aspects of communication
  • Facial expression
  • Tone of voice
• Impulsivity

APHASIA:
• Difficulty listening or reading
• Difficulty with word-finding
• Word or sound substitutions
• Simple or incorrect grammar

APRAXIA OF SPEECH:
• Slow, effortful speech
• Difficulty with pronunciation
• Trial and error movements of the lips and tongue
DYSARTHRIA:

- Reduced loudness
- Hoarse, breathy or strained voice
- Imprecise enunciation (slurring)
- Monotone
- Speaking rate may be fast or slow

All of these areas can be affected in:

- MSA
- CBD
- PSP

Managing Communication Difficulties
Can therapy be helpful?

- Yes
  - Traditional therapy
  - Establish new habits
  - Identify strategies
  - Troubleshoot
  - Periodic consultation
  - Re-evaluation
  - Identify strategies

Comprehensibility Strategies

What is comprehensibility?

- Comprehensibility means making sense of the message no matter how it is conveyed.
- It depends on all participants in the conversation and can be made easier or more difficult by the environment.

Comprehensibility Strategies

Optimizing the environment

Speaker behaviors

Listener behaviors
Optimizing the environment

- Be in the same environment!

- Avoid communication over a distance

Optimizing the environment

- Reduce distractions

- Auditory and visual distractions
- Multi-tasking
Optimizing the environment

• Choose the time and place for communication

Avoid important conversations when the speaking or listening will be difficult

Speaker Behaviors

• Speech-focused
  • Focus on how you’re saying it
• Language-focused
  • Focus on what you’re saying
• Communication-focused
  • Focus on what you’re doing
Speaker behaviors: Speech-focused

- Speak slowly

Speaker behaviors: Speech-focused

- Speak very slowly*
  - Pause briefly between each word
  - Pay attention to the small words
  - Do not separate syllables within words
  - Include every syllable
  - Maintain intonation (may have to slow even further)

*when intelligibility is more dramatically impacted

Slow speech video
Speaker behaviors: Language-focused

- When repeating
  - The first repetition, say it exactly as you said it the first time
  - Then rephrase, but make sure the listener knows you're rephrasing

Speaker behaviors: Communication-focused

- Get the listener's attention
  - Call his/her name
  - Wait until the listener is watching your face

Speaker behaviors: Communication-focused

- Use all modalities available
  - Speak
  - Point
  - Gesture
  - Facial expression
  - Pictures (point or draw)
  - Write
  - Text
  - Type
Listener Behaviors

- Give your undivided attention
  - Move close to the speaker
  - Watch the speaker

Example: Avoid the least helpful question in the English language

(http://propercourse.blogspot.com)
Listener behaviors

- Avoid the least helpful question in the English language

- Repeat the part of the message you heard
- Ask yes/no questions for clarification

Managing Swallowing Difficulties

Common swallowing difficulties in PSP

- Coughing/choking with liquids
- Taking too large bites/sips (impulsiveness)
- Slow chewing
- Swallowing several times
The Trick to Swallowing

Tips for Swallowing
• General suggestions
  • Avoid distractions
  • Don’t talk while eating
  • Clean your mouth before and after eating

Tips for Swallowing
• Selecting foods
  • Foods that are more difficult or more dangerous
    • Foods that require a lot of chewing
    • Foods that fall apart
    • Foods that are both a solid and a liquid
    • Thin liquids
Tips for Swallowing

- Selecting foods
  - Foods that are easier or safer
    - Moist foods
    - Thicker liquids

Tips for Swallowing

- While eating
  - Take small bites
  - Swallow twice
  - Alternate solids and liquids

Tips for Swallowing

- While drinking
  - Keep head neutral or chin slightly down
  - Avoid tipping head back
    - Using a straw will help prevent you from tipping your head back, but only if you take small sips...
  - Thicker liquids are easier to swallow
Tips for Swallowing

- Pills
  - Place pills in a spoonful of moist food such as yogurt, applesauce, pudding, oatmeal, etc.
  - Follow this with a sip of liquid

Questions & Discussion